



Brit. 936-19

COLLECTED

OF

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

IN

THE YEAR M,DC,LXVIII

To the present Time.

VOL. XIX.

Printed in the Year, M,DCC,XIII.

Nm. 9618

A
COLLECTION
OF THE
PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES
IN
ENGLAND,

FROM

The YEAR M,DC,LXVIII

To the present TIME.

VOL. XIX.

Printed in the Year, M,DCC,XLII.

COLLECTION

OF THE

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

IN

ENGLAND

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

THE YEAR M,DCLXVIII

TO THE PRESENT TIME

VOL. XIX

Printed in the Year, M,DCC,XLII

T H E C O N T E N T S.

L ORD <i>Polwarth's</i> speech and motion for the marine establishment, 1740. <i>Page</i> 1	
Sir <i>William Yonge's</i> speech	2
Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> speech	4
Colonel <i>Bladen's</i> speech	5
Sir <i>Robert Walpole's</i> speech	6
Mr. <i>Sandys's</i> speech	7
Lord <i>Polwarth's</i> speech	11
Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> speech	12
Sir <i>Robert Walpole's</i> speech	16
Sir <i>William Wyndham's</i> speech and motion for pa- pers	28
Sir <i>William Yonge's</i> speech	34
Lord <i>Polwarth's</i> speech	41
Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> speech and motion for papers	46
Mr. <i>Walpole's</i> speech	54
Mr. <i>Waller's</i> speech	63
Mr. <i>Tracy's</i> speech	73
Mr. Alderman <i>Heathcote's</i> speech	74
Sir <i>John Barnard's</i> speech	79
Sir <i>Robert Walpole's</i> speech	85
Mr. <i>Waller's</i> speech and motion for papers	94
Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> speech	98
Sir <i>William Yonge's</i> speech	103
Mr. <i>Sandys's</i> speech	106
Mr. <i>Lyttleton's</i> speech	112
Sir <i>John Barnard's</i> speech	114
Sir <i>Robert Walpole's</i> speech	120
Lord <i>Polwarth's</i> speech	127
Sir <i>John Hynd Cotton's</i> speech	134
Army augmentation voted	135
Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> speech upon that subject	136
Mr.	

C O N T E N T S.

Mr. <i>Shippen's</i> speech	138
Mr. <i>Gybbon's</i> speech and motion for a call	143
Mr. <i>Thompson's</i> speech	144
Members summoned to attend	145
Mr. <i>Sandys's</i> speech and motion for a place-bill.	<i>ibid.</i>
Mr. <i>Selwyn's</i> speech against it	148
Mr. <i>Lyttleton's</i> speech	154
Sir <i>William Yonge's</i> speech	160
Mr. <i>Southwell's</i> speech	164
Mr. <i>Pelham's</i> speech	168
Lord <i>Gage's</i> speech	176
Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> speech	182
Sir <i>Robert Walpole's</i> speech	197
Sir <i>William Wyndham's</i> speech	207
Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> speech and motion for a call	217
Mr. <i>Tracy's</i> speech	229
Mr. <i>Lyttleton's</i> speech	235
Mr. <i>Walpole's</i> speech	236
Lord <i>Gage's</i> speech	239
Bill brought in for registering seamen	244
Sir <i>John Barnard's</i> speech against it	<i>ibid.</i>
Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> speech	248
Admiral <i>Norris's</i> speech	249
Sir <i>William Wyndham's</i> speech	252
Sir <i>Robert Walpole's</i> speech	256
Mr. <i>Sandys's</i> speech	264
Lord <i>Gage's</i> speech	266
Bill dropp'd	271
Preparatory motions	274
Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> speech and motion for convention papers	<i>ibid.</i>
Another preparatory motion	285
Sir <i>Robert Walpole's</i> speech against Mr. <i>Pulteney's</i> motion	286
Mr. <i>Lyttleton's</i> speech	295
Lord <i>Baltimore's</i> speech against the ordinary esti- mate of the navy	300
	Sir

C O N T E N T S.

Sir Charles Wager's speech	302
Mr. Sandys's speech	303
Lord Polwarth's speech	305
Mr. Clutterbuck's speech	306
Sir George Oxenden's speech	307
Mr. Corbet's speech	<i>ibid.</i>
Lord Polwarth's answer	309
Sir William Yonge's speech	311
Mr. Pulteney's speech	313
Mr. Hay's speech	314
King's message sent to the Commons singly	<i>ibid.</i>
Lord Halifax's speech and motion thereupon	315
Lord Delawar's speech	319
Lord Talbot's speech	322
Lord Chancellor's speech	325
Lord Carteret's speech	327
Earl of Cholmondeley's speech	329
Lord Onslow's speech	331
Lord Delawar's speech	332
Lord Carteret's answer	<i>ibid.</i>
The Duke of Newcastle's speech	342
The Earl of Chesterfield's speech	347
Lord Chancellor's speech	352
Lord Carteret's speech	357
Pension bill passed by the Commons, and sent to the Lords	367
Lord Walpole's speech and motion against commit- ting this bill	368
Lord Talbot's speech	372
The Earl of Halifax's speech	375
Lord Hinton's speech	380
The Earl of Carlisle's speech	384
The Earl of Cholmondeley's speech	394
The Duke of Argyle's speech	398
Bishop of Sarum's speech	407
Lord Carteret's speech	414
The Earl of Abingdon's speech	422
The Duke of Newcastle's speech	423
The	

C O N T E N T S.

The Earl of <i>Chesterfield's</i> speech	429
Lord <i>Harvey's</i> speech	438
The Earl of <i>Abingdon's</i> speech	446
Mr. Speaker's speech to the King	454
King's speech at the end of the session	461
Parliament prorogued	463

ERRAT. Page 1, in the Margin, read 1740.

Parliamen-

Parliamentary DEBATES.

WEDNESDAY, November 28, the Lord *Polwarth*, now Earl of *Marchmont*, stood up, and spoke thus:

‘ Sir, The determination of this house shall al-
 ‘ ways be regarded by me with the highest ve-
 ‘ neration, nor shall I ever think myself at li-
 ‘ berty to renew a debate on a subject that has
 ‘ already been decided here. Yesterday, Sir,
 ‘ the house was pleased to reject a motion which
 ‘ I am persuaded every gentleman, who voted
 ‘ for it, thought was for the ease and interest of
 ‘ the nation: You thought otherwise, Sir, and
 ‘ we acquiesce. I now, Sir, stand up to make
 ‘ a motion that may, perhaps, open the eyes of
 ‘ some gentlemen, and put the affair of yester-
 ‘ day in a very different light. An honourable
 ‘ gentleman, whom I have in my eye, very
 ‘ justly took notice, that the marines, as they
 ‘ are proposed to be raised at this juncture, are
 ‘ very different from the marines that were raised
 ‘ in the beginning of the last war, and that the
 ‘ forces that are to be now raised under that de-
 ‘ nomination, are indeed no other than an ad-
 ‘ ditional number of standing troops. It is,
 ‘ Sir, in order to clear up that point, and to
 ‘ put the house upon a method of rendering our
 ‘ marine forces as serviceable, and as little bur-

Lord Pol-
 warth's
 speech and
 motion for
 the marine
 establish-
 ment, 1704.

‘ denfome to the nation, as it is poffible, that I
‘ now ftand up.

‘ I believe, Sir, the moft fanguine advocate
‘ for the prefent adminiftration, will not deny
‘ that the affairs of this nation in the late Queen
‘ *Anne*’s time, both on the civil and military e-
‘ ftablifhment, were on as good a footing as
‘ they have ever been fince. A glorious proof
‘ of it was the fuccefs which attended our arms,
‘ till thofe councils under which that war was
‘ begun, and fo bravely carried on, were fet a-
‘ fide, and gave place to others of a different
‘ tendency. The conduct therefore, Sir, of that
‘ miniftry, which had to do with a much more
‘ formidable enemy than we have at prefent,
‘ ought to be a direction to us. At that time
‘ a wife and difinterefted minifter, Sir, whom,
‘ for his honour, I may name, the Lord *Godol-*
‘ *ph**in*, raifed the power and reputation of this
‘ nation to fuch a height, as rendered it the ar-
‘ biter of the affairs of *Europe*. This, Sir, he
‘ accomplifhed by that now-defpifed virtue, fru-
‘ gality, frugality in every branch of the reve-
‘ nue. Amongft other wife regulations, then
‘ made by the government, was the eftablifh-
‘ ment of marines. But as it would be irregu-
‘ lar in me to defire the houfe to take my word
‘ upon that head, I fhall beg leave, Sir, to
‘ make the following motion, *viz. That an hum-*
‘ *ble addrefs be prefented to his Majesty, that he*
‘ *will be graciously pleafed that the eftablifhment of*
‘ *the fix regiments of the marine forces, for the*
‘ *third year of Queen Anne, be laid before this*
‘ *houfe.*’

Sir *William Yonge* fpoke next to the following
purpose:

Sir *William*
Yonge’s
fpeech.

‘ Sir, The duty of my poft under his Majesty
‘ obliges me to rife, not to oppofe this motion,
‘ but

‘ but to inform the house of a circumstance,
‘ which, if gentlemen were not informed of,
‘ might perhaps raise some suspicions of a de-
‘ sign to secrete some of the papers mov’d for
‘ by the noble Lord. Sir, I can assure the
‘ house there is no such design, for it would
‘ give me great satisfaction to meet with this
‘ estimate. But, Sir, since I came into the of-
‘ fice where I have now the honour to serve, I
‘ have been very assiduous in searching for the
‘ establishment, but never could be so lucky as
‘ to find it. This, Sir, I can account for no o-
‘ therwise, than by supposing when the gentle-
‘ man, who was then under-secretary of war,
‘ had the misfortune of having his house burnt,
‘ together with most of his papers, many of
‘ them relating to publick affairs, this establish-
‘ ment, Sir, was destroy’d; for I am certain,
‘ had it been among the papers of the office
‘ where I am concern’d, I must have found it.
‘ Therefore, I think that, by agreeing to this
‘ address, we shall only delay an affair which
‘ requires the most immediate dispatch; since, if
‘ it should be presented, I doubt not but his
‘ Majesty would give orders for laying the pa-
‘ pers before the house. This, Sir, might take
‘ up a great deal of time, to no purpose.

‘ If, therefore, gentlemen are zealous and u-
‘ nanimous in the prosecution of this war, they
‘ will not propose any address, or go into any
‘ measures that may procrastinate our preparati-
‘ ons for carrying it on. The noble Lord who
‘ spoke last, express’d a very great deference to
‘ the sense of this house, and I make not the
‘ least doubt of it; but I cannot help thinking,
‘ Sir, that if the establishment which he has
‘ been pleased to move for, were discovered and
‘ laid before us, all the use that could be made
‘ of it, would be to give rise to a debate of the
‘ same

‘ same nature with that of yesterday. The no-
 ‘ ble Lord, Sir, mentioned our great success in
 ‘ the late war, and I can join with him, Sir, in
 ‘ all the encomiums on the worthy minister
 ‘ whom he named : But I should be sorry, Sir,
 ‘ to find that any obstructions were thrown in
 ‘ the way of the present, which were unknown
 ‘ to that administration, and should be still more
 ‘ sorry were it done with a view to make the
 ‘ present minister unpopular, whom, I am per-
 ‘ suaded, his enemies would be glad to distress,
 ‘ even at the expence of the nation.’

William Pulteney, Esq; spoke next as follows:

Mr. Pulteney's speech.

‘ Sir, It is very strange that the most fair and
 ‘ reasonable motions that are made in this house,
 ‘ if they are not to the liking of certain gentle-
 ‘ men, are immediately said to be concerted
 ‘ with a view to distress the administration.
 ‘ The honourable gentleman who spoke last tells
 ‘ you that he does not rise up to oppose the
 ‘ motion, but he tells you, at the same time,
 ‘ that he thinks it a very frivolous and unneces-
 ‘ sary one. But what reason, Sir, does he give
 ‘ for all this? He has, it seems, been at great
 ‘ pains to search for the establishment moved
 ‘ for, in his own office, and because he could
 ‘ not find it, he concludes that it must have
 ‘ been burnt amongst the papers of a gentleman
 ‘ who had been under-secretary of war. I had
 ‘ the honour, Sir, once to be in that post which
 ‘ the honourable gentleman now so worthily
 ‘ fills, and I had a great many occasions to look
 ‘ out for papers of this kind, it being at a time
 ‘ when they were very much wanted. But, Sir,
 ‘ I don't recollect ever to have missed any one
 ‘ paper through that gentleman's misfortune, or
 ‘ that any publick paper of consequence was
 ‘ consumed

‘ consumed when his house was burnt. I, Sir,
 ‘ had occasion to search for papers, that bore
 ‘ date before the session mention’d in this mo-
 ‘ tion, that bore date in the very year, and af-
 ‘ ter it, but I found them all in regular order,
 ‘ and with great ease.

‘ I am far from suspecting, Sir, that the ho-
 ‘ nourable gentleman did not search very nar-
 ‘ rowly for this establishment, and I am far from
 ‘ saying that such a paper is in his office ; but if
 ‘ it is not in his office, that is no reason why it
 ‘ may not be in another, nor is it any reason
 ‘ why we ought not to address his Majesty in
 ‘ the terms of the present motion. For my
 ‘ own part, Sir, I never heard of this motion
 ‘ before it was made by the noble Lord, but I
 ‘ think it would be very irregular in us to dis-
 ‘ agree to it, merely because the honourable
 ‘ gentleman was so unfortunate as not to find
 ‘ that establishment in his own office.’

Colonel *Bladen* spoke next to the following purpose.

‘ Sir, I am old enough to remember when
 ‘ the establishment moved for by the noble Lord Colonel *Bladen*’s speech.
 ‘ was made, though I am not able to inform the
 ‘ house of the particulars, any farther than that
 ‘ an officer was appointed under the name of a
 ‘ commissary, who had the care of that esta-
 ‘ blishment, and, I believe, deliver’d his papers
 ‘ into the secretary of war’s office : So that, Sir,
 ‘ if they are not to be found there, we may de-
 ‘ spair of finding them at all. But, Sir, there
 ‘ is an honourable gentleman, a member of this
 ‘ house, who was pay-master to those marines,
 ‘ and who must know something relating to that
 ‘ establishment. I don’t see the honourable gen-
 ‘ tleman present, but if he were, I dare say, the
 ‘ house

‘ house would receive much satisfaction from his
‘ information.’

Sir *Robert Walpole* spoke next in substance as follows:

Sir *Robert*
Walpole's
speech.

‘ Sir, I shall not oppose any motion that may
‘ serve to satisfy the house; but it seems surpris-
‘ ing to me, after this affair was so fully deba-
‘ ted yesterday, to renew it to-day. I can easily
‘ see, Sir, that the tendency of this motion is to
‘ raise difficulties, and to gain time: No other
‘ tendency it can have. Yesterday a motion was
‘ made, Sir, for having the marines drawn out
‘ of the standing regiments; that motion was
‘ rejected: To-day another motion is made for
‘ having an establishment laid before the house,
‘ which nobody knows where to find; and
‘ which, tho’ it were existing, as probably it is
‘ not, must take up much time before it can be
‘ discover’d. Had the first of these motions ta-
‘ ken place, we should have heard nothing of the
‘ virtue and disinterestedness of a former great mi-
‘ nister, whose memory I believe every body has
‘ a great veneration for. Should the present mo-
‘ tion, Sir, be admitted, all the reasons brought
‘ for converting some of the standing forces into
‘ marines, must fall to the ground; but still,
‘ Sir, both motions have this consequence, that
‘ they keep up the spirit of division and debate
‘ at a time when we have the greatest reason to
‘ be unanimous. I shall therefore submit it to
‘ gentlemen, how prudent, how dutiful it is in
‘ us, after his Majesty has recommended to us,
‘ from the throne, to provide subsistence for the
‘ marines, to sit here debating upon questions
‘ that can have no effect, but either to procrastinate, or intirely to disappoint his Royal En-
‘ deavours for the service of the nation. If gen-
‘ tlemen

‘ tlemen are of opinion, that the establishment
 ‘ moved for is absolutely necessary to be seen,
 ‘ before we can grant the supplies necessary for
 ‘ the subsistence of the marines, let us immedi-
 ‘ ately agree to the motion: But, Sir, I am far
 ‘ from thinking it necessary; I fear the bad con-
 ‘ sequences that may attend our delays in this
 ‘ affair, will over-balance the benefits we can re-
 ‘ ceive from having those papers laid before us;
 ‘ and, Sir, I must be of that opinion, until I see
 ‘ reason to alter it.’

Samuel Sandys, Esq; spoke next as follows:

‘ Sir, The crown and publick have, doubt- Mr. Sandys's
speech.
 ‘ less, the highest reason to repose the most un-
 ‘ limited confidence in the capacity and dili-
 ‘ gence of their ministers and officers, not one
 ‘ of whom knows how to find a paper! When
 ‘ it is wanted, one says it is burnt, another is of
 ‘ the same opinion, and a third, who ought to
 ‘ know better than both, thinks it a matter of
 ‘ indifference, whether it is burnt or not, for it
 ‘ would be of no service to us. We are, I find,
 ‘ to have at least the pleasure of variety, and to
 ‘ see our forces, if not upon a good, upon a new
 ‘ establishment, since not one of those concern'd
 ‘ in this affair knows, or even pretends to know
 ‘ the regulations made on the like occasion al-
 ‘ most in the last reign. I always thought, Sir,
 ‘ that precedents were proper directions for a mi-
 ‘ nister to form his conduct upon, in cases ex-
 ‘ actly parallel. I conceive, Sir, we are to have
 ‘ a body of marines raised without delay; are
 ‘ we not? If we are, is it not very proper, that
 ‘ we should know the footing upon which our
 ‘ former marines were settled? We had more
 ‘ money at that time than we have now, and
 ‘ therefore we have now more need to be fru-
 ‘ gal;

gal; we were in much greater danger then than we are now, and therefore the government in that reign was under much stronger obligations not to sacrifice safety to parsimony. It is true, Sir, we have better ministers now than they had then, and a just dependence on their known abilities ought to lay all our apprehensions asleep: But I must beg leave to say, that however knowing in other particulars, they don't seem to understand one word of what they have said or been told, either yesterday or to-day upon this subject. Indeed, the honourable gentleman might have wasted many of his valuable hours before he had found this establishment in his office; for what relation had the marines to the secretary of war? But what the honourable gentleman does not seem to know, I will inform him of. He ought to have gone to the admiralty-office, and there he might have easily found it: The marines, Sir, that were raised in the third year of *Queen Anne*, were under the direction of the Lord High Admiral, they were commanded by him, and had nothing to do with the land officers. Therefore, Sir, an honourable gentleman, tho' he did not think proper to explain it, had very good reason for saying yesterday, that the forces now to be raised under the name of marines, were a quite different species of troops from those that were raised in the third year of *Queen Anne*: They, Sir, were properly marines, their business was at sea, and they were very seldom or never sent upon land service. Another thing, Sir, I must acquaint gentlemen with, lest they should happen not to know it, is, that the government, in the reign of that *Queen*, thought some regard ought to be had to the trade of this nation; they saw very plainly (what seems, indeed, not hard to discover,

‘ cover, tho’ it has hitherto escaped the piercing
‘ eyes of our present ministry) that if every ship
‘ which came home was to be deprived of her
‘ seamen, and left without hands to bring her
‘ into port, in a short time no ship would go
‘ out, and an end would soon be put to our na-
‘ vigation. What new notions have been of late
‘ advanced, I know not; but it is whispered, if
‘ not clamoured, that the commanders of our
‘ ships of war act in a very illegal, arbitrary
‘ manner. I don’t speak, Sir, of the practice
‘ of impressing, tho’ I think it a very scanda-
‘ lous one, and contrary to the privileges of a
‘ free subject; I speak of their leaving not above
‘ the master, his mate, and a boy, to bring a
‘ homeward bound ship of perhaps 2, 3, or 400
‘ ton to port, thro’ a very dangerous and diffi-
‘ cult navigation, as that upon our coasts is
‘ known to be. I have indeed heard, Sir, that
‘ the captain of a man of war has been obliged
‘ to lend the masters, whose men have been im-
‘ press’d, sailors sufficient to bring their ships
‘ into the harbour: But, Sir, I have heard at
‘ the same time, that they commonly put on
‘ board such ships the worst hands they can fix
‘ upon, tho’ that part of navigation requires the
‘ greatest judgment and experience. Therefore,
‘ Sir, the masters of the vessels, who have the
‘ misfortune to fall into their power, receive lit-
‘ tle recompense for the loss of serviceable men,
‘ in such worthless supplies, such mock-assis-
‘ tance. I lately heard, Sir, of a very melan-
‘ choly accident that happened by this manage-
‘ ment; but as I cannot depend upon my infor-
‘ mation, I shall not represent it to the house.
‘ However this be, Sir, it is certain, that the
‘ government under Queen *Anne* look’d upon
‘ this as a very oppressive method, and which
‘ call’d aloud for redress. For this reason, Sir,
‘ they

‘ they very wisely chose to supply the number of
‘ hands that were impress’d from a ship, by ma-
‘ rines, who were instructed in the art of navi-
‘ gation, and obliged to navigate the ship they
‘ were put on board of, into port: This, Sir,
‘ had an excellent effect upon our commerce, as
‘ there were 6 or 7000 marines upon the esta-
‘ blishment, who were all able sailors, and very
‘ few accidents happen’d from the impress. That
‘ number, under a proper management, was
‘ found sufficient for all the purposes of the
‘ navy, and supplied all the necessities of our
‘ merchant-men. But will the right honourable
‘ gentleman affirm, that the marines now intend-
‘ ed to be raised, are to be under the same regu-
‘ lation? No, Sir, I believe he will not.

‘ There are other very apparent differences
‘ betwixt those and the marines we are now to
‘ have, which will be best explained, when the
‘ establishment is laid before the house. I shall
‘ trouble gentlemen no further than to observe,
‘ that there can be no danger of any delay, tho’
‘ we should agree to this motion, since the gen-
‘ tlemen in the administration know now to what
‘ office they are to apply for the satisfaction
‘ which the house may require; nor would there,
‘ Sir, have been any occasion for this motion,
‘ had the motion of yesterday been agreed to.
‘ The state of the question is plainly changed;
‘ the motion of yesterday regarded rather the
‘ body of forces that are to serve on board his
‘ Majesty’s fleet, and not properly marines; but
‘ since we have been informed, that the forces
‘ proposed to be raised are in every respect ma-
‘ rines, this motion becomes very necessary; for
‘ unless the establishment be produc’d, the house
‘ can have no regular information what a marine
‘ is, and we must take every thing upon trust
‘ from the gentlemen in the administration.

‘ There-

‘ Therefore, Sir, I hope the motion will be agreed to.’

Lord *Polwarth* spoke next to the following purpose.

‘ Sir, I think it is not proper, at this juncture, to keep the house any longer in suspense; therefore, lest I should not have another opportunity, I will now inform gentlemen, that, for my own private satisfaction, I have procur’d a copy of the establishment moved for, which I now have in my hand; and as the gentlemen over the way appear all so very much at a loss about those matters, they are welcome to look into it, which, if they shall please to do, I believe they will very readily own it to be an authentick copy. Lord Polwarth’s speech.

‘ By this establishment, Sir, it appears, that the body of marines mentioned were a very useful, frugal body, consisting of a great number of private men, and few officers: Every company, instead of fifty-six or fifty effective men, with a great number of officers, contain’d one hundred men, with very few officers. Thus it is evident, Sir, you had more men, at half of the expence which the body of marines now proposed to be raised, must cost the nation. I don’t know, indeed, whether this frugality is any recommendation of the establishment to certain gentlemen; but I think it is very evident, that if we don’t follow that establishment, the forces we are now to raise are not marines, but land forces serving on board his Majesty’s fleet, and therefore they are an addition to our standing army. With what view such an addition is made, Sir, I leave gentlemen to judge: I am sure our land army is sufficiently provided for already, with regard
2 to

‘ to all the services which the nation can require
 ‘ in this war. If we are to increase our forces,
 ‘ Sir, it ought to be our sea forces: These, Sir,
 ‘ the nation never can be jealous of, because
 ‘ they are her best and most natural security, and
 ‘ it is by these alone, that we can hope to ap-
 ‘ pear formidable to the rest of the world. If,
 ‘ therefore, we are resolved to do any thing ef-
 ‘ fectual against *Spain*, we ought to be guided
 ‘ by that establishment; but if we mean only to
 ‘ gain a plausible pretence of increasing our land
 ‘ forces, already too numerous and burdensome,
 ‘ it may be very proper to have no regard to it.
 ‘ I hope, however, the gentlemen in the admi-
 ‘ nistration will be so ingenuous, as not to de-
 ‘ ceive the publick, by giving the troops that
 ‘ are to be raised the denomination of marines,
 ‘ since they will bear no manner of resemblance
 ‘ to marines.’

William Pulteney, Esq; spoke next to the following purpose.

Mr. Pulteney's speech,

‘ I am glad, Sir, that it is now no longer
 ‘ possible to conceal from the house the great
 ‘ importance of the present motion, to which
 ‘ we should still have been strangers, if the no-
 ‘ ble Lord who made it, had not procur'd a
 ‘ copy of this establishment; for it is easy to
 ‘ see, from what has already pass'd, that we
 ‘ should not have had it any other way. But,
 ‘ Sir, I cannot but think it very extraordinary,
 ‘ that gentlemen should take it upon them to in-
 ‘ form the house, that they believe any paper
 ‘ which is moved for, as of consequence to the
 ‘ publick, cannot be had: This has not been hi-
 ‘ therto the proper place for such an answer, un-
 ‘ less it be delivered by way of message from
 ‘ the crown; and even then, Sir, I believe there
 ‘ have

‘ have been instances, when this house would
‘ not have been quite satisfied, if, upon an ad-
‘ drefs for a paper which they thought necessary,
‘ the crown had return’d an answer, that it was
‘ mislaid or destroy’d. However, Sir, I have
‘ just now look’d into that establishment, not
‘ without some surprize to find, that there is so
‘ great a difference betwixt the forces that are to
‘ be now raised, and the marines in the third
‘ year of *Queen Anne*: I knew there was a dif-
‘ ference, but did not think it had been so con-
‘ siderable; for I find, that there was not only
‘ almost double the number of men in a com-
‘ pany, but that there were fewer officers, and
‘ even those upon a more sparing allowance.

‘ Sir, it is very well known, that I never have
‘ yet been a friend to *French* maxims of govern-
‘ ment, they are calculated only for a nation of
‘ slaves; and however safe and profitable they
‘ may be for the governors, however they may
‘ contribute to the security of a tyrant, they are
‘ certainly destructive of all the happiness that
‘ arises from liberty, of all the privileges of a
‘ rational being. Their government is military,
‘ as all other governments, built not upon the
‘ choice, but fear of the people, must necessa-
‘ rily be. But, Sir, tho’ I would be far from
‘ adopting into our system of civil policy any of
‘ their principles, yet I believe it may be found
‘ very necessary and prudent to imitate them in
‘ their military policy; because, their govern-
‘ ment depending upon it, we may presume,
‘ that they have studied it more than we, and
‘ left no means untry’d to bring it as near to
‘ perfection as is possible. This, Sir, seems to
‘ have been the notion of our ministry at the
‘ time when the establishment mov’d for was set-
‘ tled; for I find it indeed no other than a tran-
‘ script of the *French* regulations of the marine,
‘ who,

‘ who, by the frugal management laid down
‘ there, are enabled to furnish a body of marines
‘ at less expence than they can the same number
‘ of land forces, and the frugality of their plan
‘ consists in nothing more than in assigning but
‘ few officers to a great number of private men.

‘ Now, Sir, as the honourable gentleman and
‘ his friends have again and again insinuated by
‘ their fears, that we may be obliged to break
‘ with *France*, for it was almost solely from that
‘ apprehension, that they drew their arguments
‘ yesterday; I shall only give you a plain rea-
‘ son, drawn from common life, why we ought
‘ to adopt this regulation. Let me suppose,
‘ Sir, that I am to go to law with another per-
‘ son, who owes me a sum of money, and whose
‘ purse is equally weighty with my own; that
‘ the law-suit, as law-suits often are, will prove
‘ very tedious and expensive: Now, Sir, is it
‘ not plain, that if I shall spend three shillings,
‘ while my antagonist lays out but two, that my
‘ purse must be exhausted sooner than his; and
‘ consequently, that judgment will go against
‘ me, or if it should not, that when it is ended,
‘ I shall be so much the poorer than my antago-
‘ nist? We are upon the brink of a war with
‘ *France*; she has, by a long series of well-con-
‘ ducted measures, raised her power, and ex-
‘ tended her commerce, and consequently her
‘ purse must be heavier than ours, whose com-
‘ merce, upon which our power depends, has
‘ been so long declining. But granting her purse
‘ to be only equal to ours, if we spend most in
‘ the course of the war, our purse will be sooner
‘ drain’d, and therefore we must act under
‘ great disadvantages. I know it will be said,
‘ Sir, that the expending a little money upon a
‘ proper occasion, and at a proper time, may save
‘ a great deal upon other occasions, and at other
‘ times:

‘ times: But that argument can have no weight
‘ here, unless gentlemen can prove, that there
‘ is a proper occasion, that it is much better to
‘ have marines upon the establishment of land
‘ forces, than upon that which the noble Lord
‘ moved for; which, tho’ I have many proofs
‘ of their courage, I believe they will not at-
‘ tempt.

‘ I know, Sir, it is not very regular in me to
‘ advance any fact in this house, unless it is un-
‘ questionable, or capable of immediate proof;
‘ therefore, Sir, what I have to mention, is sub-
‘ mitted to the house, and it’s not to be doubt-
‘ ed, that if I should advance any thing con-
‘ trary to truth, there will not be wanting ei-
‘ ther abilities or inclination to confute me. I
‘ have heard, Sir, that his Majesty was advised
‘ to insert the mention of the marines in his
‘ speech, after all their officers were nam’d and
‘ had receiv’d their commissions. I am sorry,
‘ Sir, to think that any minister, however used
‘ to triumph over opposition, should so far pre-
‘ sume upon the approbation of this house to
‘ any plan, to act as if we had actually agreed
‘ to it. But this practice, Sir, has of late been
‘ too customary, and may in time creep up so
‘ as to render the advice and assent of this house
‘ to measures, previously concerted by the mi-
‘ nister, only empty form, and idle ceremony.

‘ Some gentlemen grasp at power for them-
‘ selves, my views are to give strength to the
‘ nation. The method that has been follow’d
‘ in raising those forces that are the subject of
‘ our debate, certainly was the most proper for
‘ a minister’s attaining the one; but the regu-
‘ lation laid down by the establishment now
‘ mov’d for, is the only means of producing
‘ the other. I shall trouble the house no far-
‘ ther, Sir, since I believe every gentleman, by
‘ looking

‘ looking into this establishment, is convinc’d
 ‘ of the propriety of the motion, and if gen-
 ‘ tlemen have any thing to object to the method
 ‘ therein laid down, there is a proper time for
 ‘ the doing it, when it is regularly communi-
 ‘ cated to the house ; in the mean time, I hope
 ‘ there will be no farther debate upon the mo-
 ‘ tion.’

Sir *Robert Walpole* spoke next to the following purpose.

Sir *Robert*
Walpole's
 speech.

‘ Sir, As I begin now to discover the ten-
 ‘ dency of this motion, I do not rise to oppose
 ‘ it ; for I do not think it of any consequence
 ‘ whether we agree to it or not. If gentlemen,
 ‘ at a time when unanimity and dispatch are not
 ‘ only in the most affectionate manner recom-
 ‘ mended from the throne, but required in a
 ‘ more particular manner by our present circum-
 ‘ stances, will throw in motions that can serve
 ‘ for no other end but to produce discord, con-
 ‘ tention and delay, let them answer for the con-
 ‘ sequences. For my part, Sir, I have always
 ‘ been so tender of setting aside any motion
 ‘ which gentlemen thought regular, that I have
 ‘ sometimes, when the consequences appeared
 ‘ not very formidable, forbore to oppose mo-
 ‘ tions very much contrary to my own senti-
 ‘ ments ; for it never shall be said, with truth,
 ‘ that I will oppose a motion that is not irregu-
 ‘ lar and improper, merely because it is insigni-
 ‘ ficant, or may be inconvenient to particular
 ‘ persons. Every gentleman has a right to call
 ‘ for what lights he thinks proper, as a member
 ‘ of this house, and I perceive gentlemen have
 ‘ a mind to stretch that right to its full extent.

‘ The honourable gentleman who spoke last
 ‘ but one, seemed to value himself upon having
 ‘ been

‘ been able to inform the house where the esti-
‘ mate mov’d for is to be found. If I or my
‘ friends had imagined that any gentleman would
‘ have mov’d for that estimate, we should pro-
‘ bably have been at the same pains to have in-
‘ formed ourselves as the honourable gentleman.
‘ When we were informed by his Majesty’s
‘ speech, that he intended to raise a body of ma-
‘ rines, I don’t believe that there was a gentle-
‘ man in this house, or even in the whole king-
‘ dom, who could imagine that these marines
‘ were to be upon the establishment of the third
‘ year of *Queen Anne*. It is very well known,
‘ Sir, that that establishment, as much as it has
‘ been recommended by the honourable gentle-
‘ man who sits near me, from the example of
‘ *France*, was found attended with such inconve-
‘ niencies, that four years after it was quite laid
‘ aside. The marines were appointed for the
‘ safety of the *Leeward Islands*, and our other
‘ settlements in *America*, where they were regi-
‘ mented, and where they still continue; and
‘ instead of them, land forces were appointed to
‘ serve on board the fleet. These land forces,
‘ Sir, were commonly called marines, as well
‘ as those who were discharged, and were regu-
‘ lated exactly according to the establishment
‘ intended for the present marines, as to the
‘ proportion between the number of officers and
‘ private men. Besides, if those who favour the
‘ present motion had condescended to consult
‘ the words of his Majesty’s speech, it would
‘ have set them right upon this head, and
‘ shown them that the ministry did not intend,
‘ by any equivocation, to steal upon the nation
‘ an augmentation of the standing army, as has
‘ been in plain terms asserted by the honoura-
‘ ble gentleman. His Majesty, therein, indeed,
‘ does mention marines; but then he gives us to

‘ understand, that these marines were to be soldi-
 ‘ ers, and not sailors, as the honourable gentle-
 ‘ man says the marines were in the third year of
 ‘ Queen *Anne*. Therefore, Sir, I think his Ma-
 ‘ jesty, or, (if gentlemen will rather have it so)
 ‘ they who advised his Majesty’s speech, dealt
 ‘ very plainly with the publick; for had there
 ‘ been any intention to equivocate, they would
 ‘ have kept to the general word marines, and
 ‘ then gentlemen would have had some shadow
 ‘ of reason to pretend that they had been im-
 ‘ posed upon. But give me leave to say that
 ‘ these gentlemen are very much mistaken, if
 ‘ they imagine that there is so great a difference
 ‘ betwixt the expences of the establishment that
 ‘ is now proposed, and that in the third year of
 ‘ Queen *Anne*. Mention is indeed made in that
 ‘ establishment of one hundred men to one
 ‘ company; but, Sir, there is nothing better
 ‘ known to gentlemen, who are old enough to
 ‘ remember the forces on that establishment,
 ‘ than that thirty, or five and thirty men were
 ‘ always deficient in every company; so that the
 ‘ effective men amounted but to sixty-five or se-
 ‘ venty at most. The money, Sir, that was al-
 ‘ lowed by Parliament for raising these thirty
 ‘ men, was swallowed by their officers; and no-
 ‘ thing was more easy than, by a knavish con-
 ‘ federacy betwixt the officers who commanded
 ‘ the marines, and the officers who commanded
 ‘ the sailors, to make the marines upon occa-
 ‘ sion pass for sailors, and the sailors for ma-
 ‘ rines; and thus the publick suffered on both
 ‘ hands. This, with a great many other rea-
 ‘ sons, was sufficient to induce the government to
 ‘ make an alteration of that plan, and to put
 ‘ the forces serving on board the fleet upon the
 ‘ establishment of land forces.

‘ The government and ministry that made
‘ this alteration, were the same who projected
‘ the establishment of the third of Queen *Anne*,
‘ and if their authority be sufficient to recom-
‘ mend that establishment, it must be of equal
‘ weight to justify the alteration, which was not
‘ made but upon just and weighty reasons. But
‘ if I might be indulged in a conjecture, I
‘ should be apt, Sir, to think, that the govern-
‘ ment, in agreeing to the establishment of the
‘ third of Queen *Anne*, did it chiefly with a
‘ view of pleasing the Consort of that Queen,
‘ who was then Lord High Admiral. The new
‘ marines which were to be under his command,
‘ or that of his admirals and deputies, was a
‘ very large accession to his power; but I imagine
‘ that the gentlemen who now act as commissi-
‘ oners in the office that was then totally vested
‘ in him, will not expect that any such compli-
‘ ment should be paid them by the legislature.

‘ The honourable gentleman, Sir, who spoke
‘ last, brought an argument in favour of the e-
‘ stablishment of the third of Queen *Anne*, that
‘ I did not expect to hear advanced in this
‘ house, by a professed advocate for the princi-
‘ ples of liberty. The *French*, said he, are, or
‘ ought to be, our patterns, and they take care
‘ to put an hundred men into every company of
‘ their marines. But, Sir, if they are to be our
‘ directors in this piece of military policy, why
‘ should we not copy from them their whole
‘ system? The honourable gentleman insists upon
‘ it, that they are the best judges of military af-
‘ fairs, and that we ought therefore to imitate
‘ them. But, I believe, Sir, if the ministry
‘ were to extend the military powers, and were
‘ to bring in a bill into this house for making
‘ the authority of a field-officer as great as that
‘ of a justice of the peace, and supported it

‘ with no better argument for doing it, than
 ‘ that it was practised among the *French*, who
 ‘ understand military discipline better than any
 ‘ people in *Europe*, I appeal to the honourable
 ‘ gentleman himself, if he would not be the
 ‘ first in this house to oppose such a bill? How
 ‘ would the ministry then be charged with be-
 ‘ ing the tools of *Europe*, and accused of a de-
 ‘ sign to introduce *French* maxims of govern-
 ‘ ment! I observe that gentlemen, in their op-
 ‘ position to the administration, make it their
 ‘ business to collect precedents and examples
 ‘ from their neighbours, and if they can find
 ‘ any thing parallel to them practised by the go-
 ‘ vernment, let it be never so reasonable, then
 ‘ it is always the universal clamour, that the go-
 ‘ vernment immediately designs to reduce the
 ‘ whole constitution to the *French* form, that
 ‘ they may make themselves arbitrary. But if
 ‘ some gentlemen have a favourite measure in
 ‘ view, which corresponds with any thing prac-
 ‘ tised by the government of *France*, that argu-
 ‘ ment is so far from being a reproach to it, and
 ‘ a reason why it ought not to be pursued, that it
 ‘ is recommended solely on that account. The
 ‘ *French* are, then, an extremely wise and polite
 ‘ people, their governors understand the interest
 ‘ of their country, and nothing but corruption
 ‘ and prodigality hinder us from following the
 ‘ same measures.

‘ The honourable gentleman was pleased to
 ‘ give us, what he called, a plain reason drawn
 ‘ from private life, why we should adopt the
 ‘ *French* system of finances. If I shall go to
 ‘ law, said he, with a purse equal to that of my
 ‘ antagonist, and shall spend more than he does,
 ‘ then my purse must be soonest exhausted, and
 ‘ I shall certainly suffer in the issue. But, Sir,
 ‘ I don’t see how the application is just in case
 ‘ of

‘ of a war betwixt us and *France*. I don’t deny
‘ but that it is possible we may be engaged in a
‘ war with that power, but if we be, I see no
‘ reason either for adopting any part either of
‘ her civil or military policy into our system.
‘ If that is to be done in the case of the ma-
‘ rines, I should be glad to know why it ought
‘ not to be done in the case of land forces too.
‘ If the military policy of *France* has been
‘ brought to so great perfection, why are not all
‘ our military exercises copied from them? Why
‘ do we not procure transcripts of the establish-
‘ ment of every regiment in their service, and
‘ regulate ours by the same plan? Why don’t
‘ we settle the pay both of our officers and sol-
‘ diers according to their unexceptionable exam-
‘ ple? This, Sir, would be frugality indeed,
‘ and were this done, Sir, the honourable gen-
‘ tleman’s argument would receive its full force;
‘ but we find it was disregarded all the time of
‘ the war under the reign of *Queen Anne*. At
‘ that time, Sir, the expences we went to, were
‘ much greater than those of *France*; our offi-
‘ cers of every rank were paid, I believe, a
‘ third more than those of the enemy; there-
‘ fore it would have then appeared, according
‘ to the honourable gentleman’s way of reason-
‘ ing, that tho’ our purse had been equal to that
‘ of *France*, yet it must have been much sooner
‘ exhausted. But, Sir, I never heard that any
‘ gentleman was so publick-spirited, as to rise
‘ up and declare in this house, that the nation
‘ must be ruined, if the military policy of the
‘ *French* was not adopted here. But will any
‘ gentleman, Sir, in this house, say that redu-
‘ cing the pay of our marines to the same with
‘ that of the *French* will be practicable? Is not
‘ every body, who knows the least of the *French*
‘ nation, sensible, that an *English* officer or sol-
‘ dier

‘ dier would starve upon the allowance on which
‘ the *French* could be luxurious ?

‘ Let the honourable gentleman then, Sir,
‘ first alter the manners of the people, let him
‘ render the *English* equally abstemious, sober,
‘ and temperate with the *French*, and then, Sir,
‘ the *French* military policy would not at all be
‘ impracticable here. There are gentlemen in the
‘ house, Sir, who, I dare say, have had some
‘ opportunities of knowing in what manner the
‘ *French* foldiers lived in the time of the late
‘ scarcity which prevailed in that nation. They
‘ received no more than their ordinary pay,
‘ which amounts to little more than three shil-
‘ lings and six pence of our money, and provi-
‘ sions of all kinds were twice as dear as usual ;
‘ yet, Sir, they never mutinied, nay, they ap-
‘ peared to be much more happy than the other
‘ inferior sort of people, who were all forced to
‘ go a begging, and were ready to tear their su-
‘ periors in pieces.

‘ Upon the whole, Sir, I can see but one way
‘ of recommending the *French* system, and that
‘ is, by the ministry deserving the character
‘ which he and his friends are pleased to give
‘ us. We need, Sir, only throw aside all con-
‘ cern for trade, all regard for the interest and
‘ honour of the nation abroad, all care for the
‘ ease and safety of the people at home ; in
‘ short, Sir, we need but introduce *French* max-
‘ ims of civil government, and we shall be soon
‘ under a necessity of adopting those in their mi-
‘ litary. Riches and trade introduce luxury, but
‘ a poor and an oppressed people must live as
‘ their poverty and their oppression will allow
‘ them.

‘ We have heard a great deal of the virtues
‘ of the *French* minister ; and, Sir, I am so far
‘ from detracting from them, that I think it
‘ would

‘ would be for the mutual interest of *France* and
‘ *England* too, if such a minister were always at
‘ the head of the government of *France*: But gen-
‘ tlemen talk as if the natural interest of *England*
‘ and *France* were absolutely incompatible; and
‘ from this would infer, that every first minister
‘ in *France*, if he sincerely consults the interests
‘ of his own country, must ruin and undermine
‘ those of *England*. Sir, in my humble opini-
‘ on, it is very possible for a minister of *France*,
‘ as the present minister does, to make the peo-
‘ ple of *France* as happy as the form of their
‘ constitution and government will admit of,
‘ and yet give *Great Britain* no just grounds for
‘ being jealous that he does it at the expence of
‘ her commerce. I appeal to facts, Sir, admit-
‘ ting the increase of the commerce of *France*
‘ to be as great as it has of late years been
‘ given out to be; yet how can that affect us,
‘ if we are sensible that our own commerce is in
‘ a more flourishing condition, than it was when
‘ that of *France* was precarious and obstructed?
‘ Can gentlemen pretend that we have sunk in
‘ one branch of trade without rising proportion-
‘ ably in another? Can they pretend that we
‘ employ a less number of ships now than for-
‘ merly? Can they say that there is less money
‘ in the nation now than there was formerly? I
‘ believe, Sir, it might be made appear to a de-
‘ monstration, that our exports are greater than
‘ ever were known; and it is only by the ex-
‘ ports of a nation that the state of its com-
‘ merce can be examined. It can be made ap-
‘ pear, Sir, by the experience of every man in
‘ trade, that our credit daily gains ground; and
‘ I believe there is not a gentleman in this house
‘ who, if he speaks his real sentiments, will not
‘ own that he never knew such abundance of
‘ money in the nation.

‘ Why then are we to make any alteration in
‘ our military policy? Because, say gentlemen,
‘ we can’t afford to spend more than *France*. I
‘ will venture to say, Sir, that we are at present
‘ in a better condition than we were towards the
‘ end of the last war, and yet I heard of no
‘ such proposals at that time. But, says the ho-
‘ nourable gentleman, the *French* are very much
‘ increased in trade since that period, and there-
‘ fore their purse must be much more weighty
‘ now than it was then. Sir, if their trade is
‘ increased, so is ours: But what proofs have we
‘ of such an increase of their trade as is com-
‘ monly supposed? Does it appear from the
‘ great number of their ships which they em-
‘ ploy? No, Sir, I believe it will be found
‘ upon enquiry, that in all the branches of trade
‘ which they have improved, they employ *Brit-
‘ ish* vessels as carriers, and that there has been
‘ but a very inconsiderable addition made to
‘ their shipping, notwithstanding the long peace
‘ they have enjoyed, and the great opportunities
‘ they have had. But, Sir, I say it again, tho’
‘ the *French* had of late received this great ac-
‘ cession of power and trade, is that any reason
‘ why the *British* ministry should be libelled and
‘ traduced? Is it any reason, Sir, why the go-
‘ vernment here should be blamed for not de-
‘ claring war, or at least breaking with *France*?
‘ Has she done any thing inconsistent with trea-
‘ ties? Has she invaded any of our possessions?
‘ Has she broken any stipulations that were
‘ made in our favour? No; if she has increased
‘ her power and trade of late, she has done it
‘ by means which we have no reason to com-
‘ plain of, therefore it would be unjust, as well
‘ as impolitick, to break with her upon that ac-
‘ count. I should not have mentioned this here,
‘ Sir, had I not for some time observed, that
‘ gentlemen

gentlemen never mention the power and commerce of *France* but with a design to depreciate that of *Great Britain*: With how much justice, Sir, I leave every unprejudiced examiner to determine. *France* can never violate any of our rights of commerce, unless she has a power at sea sufficient to support her; but while this is covered with our armaments, the interests of this nation must be safe. Had *France*, during the long peace she has enjoyed, been concerting measures for rendering herself the rival of our naval force, then, indeed, the government here might have found reason to look upon her with a jealous eye. But, Sir, the case is quite otherwise; she is not near so powerful now by sea as she was in the last war, and our power is increased. This is a plain, and indeed the most convincing proof, that she has no ambitious views to the prejudice of this nation, and that if she had, they may easily be frustrated.

But while I say this, I am far from thinking that we have nothing to dread from *France*; I know, Sir, how formidable she is on another element, where we shall be unable to oppose her, without a strong army of land forces; I know what strong motives that nation has from interest, and her Monarch from blood and relation, to be jealous, if we should be too successful against *Spain*; but I know at the same time, Sir, it is in our own power, if we are steady in our counsels, and united among ourselves, to defeat the attempts of both. The knowledge of this, Sir, makes me declare against every measure that may weaken us at home, even tho' it should be attended with a little saving to the nation.

I ask pardon of the house for taking up their time thus long upon a point that does
not

‘ not indeed admit of debate, since I believe
‘ there will not be a single negative to the mo-
‘ tion. But when gentlemen throw out reflec-
‘ tions and suggestions, they are apt to triumph,
‘ if no notice is taken of them.

‘ I shall now, Sir, only say two words in an-
‘ swer to what was further alledged by the ho-
‘ nourable gentleman. He was pleased to re-
‘ mark, and to inforce his observation with
‘ great warmth of language, that it was an in-
‘ tolerable indignity to the honour of this
‘ house, that the officers of the marine regi-
‘ ments were appointed before this house had
‘ agreed that the levies should be made. Sir,
‘ I believe there is not a more fundamental
‘ maxim in all the *English* constitution, than
‘ that his Majesty may provide for the safety of
‘ the nation, whenever he conceives it to be en-
‘ dangered; and this, Sir, he may do by raising
‘ whatever number of troops he thinks proper.
‘ It is true, the Parliament is to judge how far
‘ it was necessary in such an exigency to raise
‘ these troops, and to determine whether the na-
‘ tion shall pay them or not. This power in the
‘ Sovereign, Sir, in former times, when Parlia-
‘ ments were seldom called, or, if called, im-
‘ mediately dismissed if they were not obsequi-
‘ ous to the court, was dangerous in the hands
‘ of a weak or ambitious Prince; but, Sir, there
‘ is no danger now that any bad use can be
‘ made of it. His Majesty, every year, gives
‘ the Parliament an opportunity of offering him
‘ their advice, or of approving, or disappro-
‘ ving, the measures of his ministry. During
‘ our recess, he entered into a war, urged to it
‘ by the unanimous advice of his injured peo-
‘ ple. This war was to be supported with vi-
‘ gour. Was his Majesty to delay the raising
‘ the marine regiments till the meeting of the
‘ Parlia-

‘ Parliament, and then delay it longer till all
‘ the forms of this house and the other are
‘ gone thro’ in settling their allowance? No,
‘ Sir, he was to shew the enemy that he had a
‘ just confidence in his people, and that he was
‘ resolved to obtain satisfaction for their injuries,
‘ by making the most vigorous and effectual
‘ preparations. Had he delayed nominating the
‘ officers, he must have likewise delayed to levy
‘ the troops, since it is well known that this is
‘ the business of the officers; and this is a delay
‘ that might have been attended with very de-
‘ structive consequences.

‘ But what the honourable gentleman seems
‘ most offended at, is, that the commissions on
‘ this new establishment must create a great
‘ many friends to the ministry, or, if he will,
‘ the minister. Sir, I believe every gentleman
‘ will readily grant, that if they can be of any
‘ service to the ministry, it must be because ei-
‘ ther themselves or their friends sit in this
‘ house. Now, Sir, I have looked over the list
‘ of the promotions that have been made of the
‘ marines, and I can’t find that any one of the
‘ officers that have been newly made, either sits
‘ himself, or has any friends that sit in this
‘ house; at least, Sir, I will venture to say that
‘ not one of them have been advanced upon a
‘ parliamentary recommendation, and will defy
‘ the honourable gentleman to prove the con-
‘ trary.

‘ It is possible, indeed, Sir, that some of
‘ their friends may sit in this house, but if we
‘ were to promote nobody who had the least re-
‘ lation or dependance upon any member here,
‘ or in another place, I am afraid that the nation
‘ would lose some of her best and most promi-
‘ sing officers. The sum, therefore, of what
‘ the honourable gentleman has said on this
‘ head

‘ head is, that his Majesty ought never, on any
 ‘ account, to make the least addition to his land
 ‘ forces without consulting him and his friends;
 ‘ or if he does, that they at least should have
 ‘ the nomination of the officers. This, Sir, ac-
 ‘ cording to him, would give strength to the
 ‘ nation, but it would be such a strength as
 ‘ would only operate in mischief, and tear in
 ‘ pieces the constitution.

‘ Upon the whole, Sir, I am far from oppo-
 ‘ sing this motion, I only think it has provoked
 ‘ gentlemen to use a great many harsh expressi-
 ‘ ons, and to advance a great many facts that
 ‘ might better have been spared. Had the mo-
 ‘ tion been made as it ought to have been, and
 ‘ gentlemen given their reasons for it, without
 ‘ entering into what was quite foreign, I should
 ‘ neither have given the house nor myself this
 ‘ trouble.’

Upon putting the question, the motion was
 agreed to without a division.

Thursday, November 29, Sir William Wyndham
 stood up and spoke in substance as follows, viz.

*Sir William
 Wyndham's
 speech and
 motion for
 papers.*

‘ Sir, The great expence in which the nation
 ‘ is involved by the present war, gives us a
 ‘ right to know by what means, and by whose
 ‘ encouragement, an enemy, that is, in appear-
 ‘ ance, by no means equal to the strength which
 ‘ this nation is able to exert, has ventured to
 ‘ provoke us. War, Sir, is a terrible evil, e-
 ‘ specially to a trading people; and even the
 ‘ present war, if it could have been avoided
 ‘ without forfeiting all the honour, without ru-
 ‘ ining all the interests of this nation, ought not
 ‘ to have been declared; but it is a war, Sir, of
 ‘ necessity, as every war ought to be, and not
 ‘ choice;

‘ choice ; it is a war justifiable by every maxim
‘ of government, by every principle of self-
‘ preservation ; a war in which every thing that
‘ is dear or valuable is endangered. But, Sir,
‘ the stronger the reasons were which forced us
‘ into this war, the more worthy the attention
‘ of this house is every step which led us into
‘ the necessity of declaring it. The world, Sir,
‘ has hitherto been very much at a loss, with re-
‘ gard to the management of the national inte-
‘ rests at the court of *Spain*. If we are to judge
‘ by appearances, if we are to trust our own sen-
‘ ses, the *Spaniards* have either received very
‘ great encouragement, or very insufferable pro-
‘ vocation ; their conduct, Sir, is not to be ac-
‘ counted for, if we don’t suppose that one of
‘ these has happened, or that they are totally
‘ deprived of common sense. For how can it
‘ be imagined, that they would be so tenacious
‘ of a claim, that is not founded upon any one
‘ principle of reason, nor so much as warranted
‘ by practice, as to pull down the resentment of
‘ a people undoubtedly able to ruin them, be-
‘ yond recovery, by seizing the very source
‘ which supplies their strength and supports
‘ their insolence?

‘ I know it has been said, Sir, and possibly
‘ may now, that the obstinacy of *Spain* has been
‘ produced by another cause ; I mean her expec-
‘ tations, her assurances of being supported in
‘ this war by a neighbouring power. But, Sir,
‘ considering the disposition which that court has
‘ still discovered for promoting an accommoda-
‘ tion, there is little reason to think that such
‘ expectations of assistance are built upon any
‘ assurances, or upon any encouragement which
‘ she received from that court. The very na-
‘ ture of the differences betwixt us and *Spain*,
‘ and our superior strength by sea, must dictate
‘ to

‘ to the court of *France* pacifick sentiments.
‘ That court, Sir, has always been noted for un-
‘ derstanding and pursuing her own interests,
‘ often in opposition to all the ties of honour,
‘ gratitude and religion: And can we suppose,
‘ Sir, that she will not consult them now, when
‘ she can do it consistently with all these? What,
‘ Sir, could *France* propose by fomenting and
‘ encouraging a difference betwixt us and *Spain*?
‘ Give me leave to say it, Sir, she herself must
‘ be a more considerable sufferer than the *Spani-*
‘ *ards*, if this war is pushed with a vigour an-
‘ swerable to the expectations of the publick,
‘ and the greatness of our injuries. Our supe-
‘ riority at sea will give us an opportunity to
‘ strike a blow that must wound her interests in
‘ the most sensible part, and cut off for ever the
‘ annual supplies of a treasure, that is the chief
‘ instrument of her government, as well as
‘ strongest support of her power. I say, Sir, it
‘ is owing to the sums received by *France* every
‘ year, which amount to seven ninths of the
‘ whole treasure that comes from *America* to
‘ *Spain*, that she is now enabled to make so for-
‘ midable a figure; and it has been, it is now,
‘ in our power to cut off that communication.
‘ This is so natural a consequence of a war be-
‘ twixt us and *Spain*, that the court of *France*
‘ must be infatuated if they do not see it, and
‘ endeavour to prevent it.

‘ Thus, Sir, it is highly improbable that
‘ *France* would foment differences betwixt us
‘ and *Spain*, unless we can suppose she had po-
‘ sitive assurances from *England* itself, that things
‘ never should be carried to the extremities of
‘ war, or, if they were, that that war should be
‘ so managed, as that *Spain* should have no rea-
‘ son to complain of being too hard pushed.
‘ And indeed, Sir, if we may be allowed to
‘ judge

‘ judge by appearances, they have had no such
‘ reason yet; for the war has hitherto been ma-
‘ naged, as if we were afraid lest they should
‘ think us rude and unpolite.

‘ Therefore, Sir, as we may venture to affirm
‘ it impossible that this obstinacy, on the part of
‘ *Spain*, can arise from the hope of being suc-
‘ cessful against the power of *Great Britain*, if
‘ she stands alone, and unassisted; as we may
‘ venture to pronounce it highly improbable
‘ that she should be encouraged in this obsti-
‘ nacy by *France*, the only power in *Europe*
‘ from which she could expect assistance, we
‘ may reasonably conclude, that this obstinacy
‘ proceeds from other motives than any that
‘ have been hitherto discovered.

‘ When two sessions ago a motion was made
‘ to address his Majesty for certain papers rela-
‘ ting to our negotiation with *Spain*, it was
‘ pronounced highly unreasonable; because by
‘ such an address we should have taken a de-
‘ pending negotiation out of the hand of the
‘ ministry, and shown disrespect to the person of
‘ his Majesty. These, Sir, with certain other
‘ arguments equally cogent, determined the
‘ house to reject the motion.

‘ I am afraid that, by rejecting that motion
‘ when it was made, we have contributed to
‘ draw upon his Majesty, after a long and fruit-
‘ less series of negotiations, the necessity of ap-
‘ pealing to the decision of the sword. Had we
‘ been at that time thoroughly informed of the
‘ state of affairs between us and *Spain*, had we
‘ known so much of the transaction as to have
‘ been able to give his Majesty our advice, I am
‘ persuaded that this war might have been pre-
‘ vented, as well as the inglorious circumstances
‘ with which it has been carried on.

‘ Now,

‘ Now, Sir, all negotiations are at an end,
 ‘ and it neither can be detrimental to the nation,
 ‘ nor disrespectful to his Majesty, if this house
 ‘ exerts its privileges of calling for the papers
 ‘ that may give us a light in the measures that
 ‘ preceded the breach betwixt the courts of
 ‘ *Great Britain* and *Spain*; and as it may be ob-
 ‘ jected, that some papers are of too tender a na-
 ‘ ture to be communicated to the publick, so
 ‘ soon after the declaration of war, I shall con-
 ‘ fine the motion I have to make, to the period
 ‘ betwixt the conclusion of the treaty of *Seville*,
 ‘ and the twelfth year of his Majesty’s reign.
 ‘ This, Sir, will take off the force of all ob-
 ‘ jections of that kind, and give the house, I
 ‘ believe, a satisfactory information, with regard
 ‘ to the nature of our late negotiations.

‘ It is, Sir, with the greater confidence that I
 ‘ make this motion, as I am convinced, that the
 ‘ gentlemen who are in the administration can
 ‘ have no reason to oppose it, but on the con-
 ‘ trary, will be fond of joining in a proposal,
 ‘ which, if they have acted a fair and impartial
 ‘ part for the interest of their country, cannot
 ‘ fail to establish their credit amongst the people,
 ‘ and dissipate all misrepresentations of their
 ‘ conduct; it cannot fail to rectify the mistakes
 ‘ of the misinform’d, quiet the suspicions of
 ‘ the wavering, and increase the alacrity of the
 ‘ confident. Let it not give offence, Sir, I will
 ‘ be so plain with gentlemen as to say that the
 ‘ publick is not without suspicions, that there
 ‘ are some designs yet undiscovered, and that
 ‘ the interest of the nation, if conducted by the
 ‘ same hands in the time of war, as in the time
 ‘ of peace, will not be very solicitously attended
 ‘ to, or zealously prosecuted. This, Sir, con-
 ‘ tributes much to depress the spirits, and ob-
 ‘ struct the efforts of many dutiful and honest
 ‘ subjects;

‘ subjects; and this enquiry must either bring
‘ the secret actors in the scene of iniquity to
‘ light, or it will remove the fears of the pub-
‘ lick. Therefore, Sir, I take the liberty to
‘ move,

‘ First, That an humble address be presented
‘ to his Majesty, that he will be graciously pleas-
‘ ed to give directions that there be laid before
‘ this house, copies or extracts of such memori-
‘ als or representations, as have been made ei-
‘ ther to the King of *Spain* or his ministers,
‘ from the treaty of *Seville* to *March* 9, 1738,
‘ relating to any losses sustained by his Majesty’s
‘ subjects, by depredations committed by the
‘ *Spaniards* in *Europe* or *America*, which have
‘ not already been laid before this house.

‘ Secondly, That an humble address be pre-
‘ sented to his Majesty, that he will be graci-
‘ ously pleased to give directions, that there be
‘ laid before this house, copies or extracts of all
‘ letters written and instructions given by the se-
‘ cretaries of state, or commissioners for execu-
‘ ting the office of Lord High Admiral of *Great*
‘ *Britain*, to any of the governors of the *British*
‘ plantations in *America*, or any commander in
‘ chief or captains of his Majesty’s ships of war,
‘ or his Majesty’s minister in *Spain*, and consuls
‘ in *Europe*, from the treaty of *Seville* to *January*
‘ 1, 1738, relating to any losses sustained by his
‘ Majesty’s subjects, by depredations committed
‘ by the *Spaniards* in *Europe* or *America*, which
‘ have not already been laid before this house.

‘ Thirdly, That an humble address be pre-
‘ sented to his Majesty, that he will be graci-
‘ ously pleased to give directions, that there be
‘ laid before this house, copies of all the in-
‘ structions and letters sent to Mr. *Keene* by his
‘ Majesty’s ministers, authorizing him to con-
‘ clude and sign the convention between his Ma-
‘ jesty

‘ jefty and the King of *Spain*, on *January* 14,
 ‘ 1739, N. S.’

He was answered by Sir *William Yonge*, to the following purpose.

Sir *William*
Yonge's
speech.

‘ Sir, I could have wished that a motion of
 ‘ this importance had been made in a fuller
 ‘ house, and when gentlemen, who are best able
 ‘ to expose the unreasonableness and impropriety
 ‘ of it, had been present. I shall, however,
 ‘ endeavour to convince gentlemen, that our a-
 ‘ greeing to it must be attended with great in-
 ‘ conveniencies.

‘ The honourable gentleman, who made the
 ‘ motion, was at great pains to find out the rea-
 ‘ sons why the court of *Spain* had put his Ma-
 ‘ jefty under the necessity of declaring war.
 ‘ But can any better reason be given for the con-
 ‘ duct of a court, when it is irreconcilable to
 ‘ common sense, and its visible interests, than
 ‘ that it is pushed on by an impolitick ambi-
 ‘ tion, or that its counsels are carried on by
 ‘ weak and wicked ministers? If this, Sir, is
 ‘ the case with *Spain*, are the ministers here to
 ‘ be answerable for her conduct? Are they,
 ‘ Sir, to be arraign'd, because that Monarch or
 ‘ his Queen will not follow the advice and di-
 ‘ rections of the opposition here? Sir, I dare
 ‘ say, it was not for want of being put in mind
 ‘ both of their interest and danger, by our mi-
 ‘ nistry, that the *Spanish* court have pushed
 ‘ things to this extremity; but if they were
 ‘ not so wise as we would have them, is the
 ‘ blame to be laid on our ministers? The history
 ‘ of all ages, and of all countries, gives us in-
 ‘ stances, frequent instances, of the effects of
 ‘ rash ambition; and the history of no country
 ‘ is more pregnant with those instances than that
 ‘ of

‘ of *Spain*. Gentlemen may remember, that, not
‘ much above twenty years ago, this very court
‘ drew upon herself the arms of the three most
‘ powerful Monarchs in *Europe*, I mean the Em-
‘ peror, King of *Great Britain*, and King of *France*.
‘ All these powers attack’d her with considerable
‘ fleets and armies at once; and had it not been
‘ for the defeat we gave her by sea, she was in
‘ a fair way, Sir, of creating great perplexities
‘ to them all. I was then in Parliament, Sir,
‘ but I did not hear any statesman accused of
‘ having, by his counsels, encouraged *Spain* to
‘ measures that made this war necessary. It was
‘ universally allowed to have proceeded from
‘ the dangerous schemes of an ambitious priest,
‘ then at the head of the *Spanish* counsels; and
‘ why may not a like reason be assign’d for her
‘ present conduct?

‘ But I am afraid, Sir, the conduct of the
‘ court of *Spain* is not founded upon such unrea-
‘ sonable, precarious views, as every *Englishman*
‘ would willingly suppose. They tell you them-
‘ selves, Sir, that the madness of the people
‘ here has pushed things to this extremity; and
‘ why should we go farther to seek a reason for
‘ their conduct? They had a minister, Sir, who
‘ was an eye-witness of the violence and disre-
‘ spect, with which the greatest characters in the
‘ nation were treated, if they did the least in-
‘ cline to bring about an accommodation. It
‘ was very natural for this minister to inform his
‘ court of all this, and as natural for them to
‘ think, that in a country where animosities and
‘ heats run so high, one of these two things
‘ must happen; either, that if a peace were
‘ made, it would be observed no longer than
‘ the faction had strength enough to come into
‘ the administration; or, that from a country so
‘ divided they should meet but with a faint re-
‘ sistance.

‘ sistance. Thus, Sir, the honourable gentle-
 ‘ man might have found the greatest part of his
 ‘ speech answered by the *Spanish* manifesto, of
 ‘ which we have no reason to doubt the truth,
 ‘ in this particular at least, because it coincides
 ‘ with our own knowledge and experience.

‘ As to what the honourable gentleman said
 ‘ about the improbability that *France* should ever
 ‘ suggest warlike counsels to *Spain*, or encourage
 ‘ her to come to a rupture with us, I wish that
 ‘ his reasoning, specious as it seems, may not be
 ‘ founded on a mistake. For tho’ I am far from
 ‘ thinking that *France* would willingly venture
 ‘ the great share she has in the treasure imported
 ‘ in the *Spanish* galleons, yet I am very much
 ‘ convinced, that she would be much better
 ‘ pleased to see the possession of the mines from
 ‘ which these treasures come, and the keys of
 ‘ the whole trade, in the hands of *Spain* than in
 ‘ those of *Great Britain*. Nay, I will go far-
 ‘ ther, Sir, and say, that if she is of opinion,
 ‘ that a clandestine trade has been encouraged
 ‘ and carried on by our merchants on the coasts
 ‘ of *Spain*, she will look upon that trade as de-
 ‘ trimental to her interests, as well as incon-
 ‘ sistent with treaties, and therefore be very
 ‘ ready to join in every measure that may check
 ‘ it. Besides, Sir, we are yet in the dark, with
 ‘ regard to the reception which she gave to the
 ‘ resolutions of this Parliament on that head.
 ‘ We don’t know whether she may not be of o-
 ‘ pinion, that our assertion of a right to be ex-
 ‘ empted from all search upon the *American*
 ‘ coasts, is inconsistent with the exclusion of all
 ‘ other nations from trading with the *Spanish*
 ‘ *West-Indies*, and that it may open such a door
 ‘ for fraudulent transactions, and give such op-
 ‘ portunities to smugglers on that coast, as may
 ‘ utterly defeat all the intent and meaning of
 ‘ the

‘ the most positive treaties. I hope, Sir, this is
‘ not the case, but if it is, we have a farther
‘ reason for the obstinacy of *Spain*.

‘ But to proceed now, Sir, to the propriety of
‘ the honourable gentleman’s motion. He was
‘ pleased to observe, that none of the reasons
‘ that induced the house to give a negative to
‘ this motion two sessions ago, could now sub-
‘ sist. Sir, I shall very readily admit, that our
‘ affairs with *Spain* are in a very different situ-
‘ ation now from what they were in at that
‘ time: But, Sir, that is no reason why other
‘ circumstances may not have rendered it highly
‘ improper for us to agree to this motion. In
‘ the first place, Sir, we have already had all
‘ the papers laid before us, in which it was pos-
‘ sible for us to receive the least information;
‘ for the motion which the honourable gentle-
‘ man says was rejected two sessions ago, was
‘ only amended, by being limited to a certain
‘ period, because the circumstances of that junc-
‘ ture rendered it improper that all the papers
‘ mov’d for should be laid before the house.

‘ The present, Sir, is the most unfit juncture
‘ that gentlemen could possibly have pitch’d
‘ upon for a motion of this nature. It is in
‘ his Majesty’s choice to answer this address,
‘ should we agree to it, in what manner he
‘ pleases; and how can we expect a favourable
‘ answer to an address, that can serve no other
‘ end, but to express the distrust of this house,
‘ not only with regard to his Majesty’s servants,
‘ but himself? While negotiations were depend-
‘ ing, gentlemen had some reason, at least an
‘ appearance of reason, for motions of this na-
‘ ture; but since the nation has now received
‘ all the satisfaction on the part of the ministry
‘ that she can desire, since his Majesty has now
‘ comply’d with the voice of his people, and is

‘ vindicating his own and the national honour,
 ‘ by a vigorous prosecution of a just war, what
 ‘ shadow of reason, what pretext can be given
 ‘ for our calling for those papers? Can we pre-
 ‘ tend that we want information? No, Sir; we
 ‘ have already had all the papers that are neces-
 ‘ sary for our information, for in the eleventh
 ‘ year of his Majesty’s reign the following reso-
 ‘ lution stands on your votes, *viz.*

“ That an humble address be presented to
 “ his Majesty, that he will be graciously pleased
 “ to give directions to be laid before this house,
 “ copies or extracts of the several petitions, re-
 “ presentations, memorials, and all other pa-
 “ pers, relating to the *Spanish* depredations upon
 “ the subjects of *Great Britain*, which have been
 “ presented to his Majesty, or delivered to ei-
 “ ther of his Majesty’s principal secretaries of
 “ state, since *Midsummer* last, together with co-
 “ pies, or extracts, of such memorials or repre-
 “ sentations, as have been made, either to the
 “ King of *Spain*, or his ministers, and of the
 “ letters written to his Majesty’s minister at
 “ *Madrid* relating to the said depredations.”

‘ Thus far the house at that time thought fit
 ‘ to comply with the terms of an honourable
 ‘ gentleman’s motion; and tho’ another ho-
 ‘ nourable gentleman, last session, thought pro-
 ‘ per to make the motion we are now upon, yet
 ‘ the house very wisely rejected it, and I hope
 ‘ this motion will meet with the same fate. Not
 ‘ that I am against any measure, which would
 ‘ conduce to the information of the house, did
 ‘ I think that such an information could pro-
 ‘ mote the interest of the nation: But were I
 ‘ not acquainted with the candour and wisdom
 ‘ of the worthy gentleman who made this mo-
 ‘ tion, I should be apt to think that it pro-
 ‘ ceeded either from curiosity or revenge, the
 ‘ first

‘ first a motive too trifling, and the other too
‘ cruel for me to charge any gentleman with
‘ upon mere suspicions. Yet, Sir, what can
‘ gentlemen expect, or hope from this inquiry,
‘ except it is to start some new objection to the
‘ conduct of the ministry, and increase the cla-
‘ mours of the opposition, tho’ at the same time
‘ that conduct has always had the approbation of
‘ his Majesty and the Parliament, and has, since
‘ the declaration of war, been justify’d by, what
‘ gentlemen have of late affected to extol as the
‘ test of merit, the voice of the people. Had
‘ the ministry, Sir, trifled with the nation; had
‘ they meanly truckled to the court of *Spain*,
‘ and delay’d or deny’d a war, then indeed gen-
‘ tlemen might have had some reason for sus-
‘ pecting that there were some designs yet undis-
‘ cover’d, that this house was imposed upon by
‘ the ministry, and the nation betrayed.

‘ But there are considerations, Sir, arising
‘ from the nature of the motion itself, which
‘ are sufficient to determine me to give it my
‘ negative. We are now engaged in a war with
‘ *Spain*; but that war was preceded by a long
‘ negotiation, by which his Majesty endeavoured
‘ to avoid the calamities that attend war. This
‘ negotiation, Sir, pass’d thro’ several hands, it
‘ was attended with various difficulties, and no
‘ man can take it upon him to say, how far o-
‘ ther powers may have been interested, and
‘ how far they may imagine themselves injured,
‘ should every thing relating to them be laid
‘ open to the publick view. I call it the pub-
‘ lick view, because it is next to impossible that
‘ the nature of papers, expos’d to so numerous
‘ an assembly as this is, should remain long a se-
‘ cret. It is, or ought to be, the wisdom of
‘ the administration to avoid every step that can
‘ give *France*, or any of our neighbours, the

‘ least umbrage at present. If *Spain* is the only
‘ enemy that we shall have to contend with,
‘ there is the highest probability that this war
‘ will be attended with honour and success; but
‘ if other powers should discover secrets from
‘ papers laid before this house, and be so far en-
‘ raged by the affront as to resent it by taking
‘ part with our enemies, it is hard to say how far
‘ the flames of war may spread, or when they
‘ may be extinguish’d.

‘ Whoever, Sir, considers the nature of our
‘ negotiations after the treaty of *Seville*, and the
‘ various interruptions and perplexities that they
‘ met with from the fluctuating situation of af-
‘ fairs in *Europe*, may easily conceive, that there
‘ are papers among those moved for by the ho-
‘ nourable gentleman, by no means proper for
‘ our inspection. Sometimes we were in good
‘ terms with *France*, sometimes at variance. Per-
‘ haps we might interfere now and then in a pri-
‘ vate affair with the *Dutch*, for they had their
‘ differences to adjust as well as we; sometimes
‘ with other powers. Now, Sir, would it be
‘ prudent in us, at a time when we ought to
‘ court, or at least preserve, a neutrality with
‘ all these powers, to expose all the different
‘ memorials relating to matters of commerce
‘ presented to the court of *Spain*? In private
‘ differences, Sir, gentlemen know that a great
‘ many things pass, which vary according to the
‘ humours and views of the parties, and which,
‘ after the differences are settled, the authors
‘ would be displeased to hear so much as men-
‘ tioned. I may be piqu’d at a man, and treat
‘ him very roughly, perhaps send him a sharp
‘ letter, or complain of him privately to our
‘ mutual friends; yet it is possible that our ani-
‘ mosity may be succeeded by friendship, I may
‘ be convinced that justice was on his side, or
‘ that

‘ that I was imposed on by false reports ; and
 ‘ then I shall perhaps be ashamed for some
 ‘ things, that I thought both just and prudent
 ‘ for me to do, while the mistake was yet undis-
 ‘ cover’d. Perhaps, if the person shall know I
 ‘ took these steps, he will break with me again.
 ‘ But the case is much harder in publick affairs :
 ‘ A minister, Sir, can’t pursue the dictates of
 ‘ his own inclinations, he must follow those of
 ‘ his constituents ; and a minister, like ours, at
 ‘ the court of *Spain*, who is soliciting for redress
 ‘ for a great body of men, cannot be so tho-
 ‘ roughly acquainted with facts, as not some-
 ‘ times to be imposed upon ; and an affair will
 ‘ carry a very different aspect, when the circum-
 ‘ stances attending it are alter’d.

‘ Upon the whole, Sir, I think this motion
 ‘ entirely useless for the information of the
 ‘ house, tending to create difficulties and dis-
 ‘ trusts where none ought to subsist, and may be
 ‘ dangerous in its consequences to the interests
 ‘ of the nation in the present war. Therefore
 ‘ I hope gentlemen will vote, with me, that it
 ‘ ought not to be agreed to.’

He was answer’d by the Lord *Polwarth* to the following effect.

‘ Sir, If gentlemen shall determine to reject
 ‘ this motion, I don’t see to what purpose we sit
 ‘ here. If upon every occasion that we shall ex-
 ‘ ercise our undoubted privilege of calling for
 ‘ papers from the crown, which may be of ser-
 ‘ vice for the information of the house, we shall
 ‘ be told that the motion proceeds not from re-
 ‘ gard to the publick, but from a spirit of re-
 ‘ venge or faction, I believe gentlemen will be
 ‘ very backward in exposing themselves to such
 ‘ a treatment. It has ever, Sir, been the prac-
 ‘ tice

Lord Pol-
 warth’s
 speech.

' tice and privilege of this house to call for pa-
 ' pers from the crown, even when affairs of
 ' small consequence were before them. And
 ' shall not we exert that privilege now, when
 ' the nation has been, by notorious mismanage-
 ' ments, long continued, and openly defended,
 ' even in her honour as well as interest almost
 ' destroyed, and is now engaged in a war, the
 ' necessary effects of these mismanagements?
 ' Sir, I will be so free with the honourable gen-
 ' tleman who spoke last, as to say, that I am for
 ' agreeing to this motion, not barely for the
 ' sake of that information which curiosity may
 ' expect from these papers, but of that which
 ' my duty to my country, my zeal for his Ma-
 ' jesty's honour, and my concern for the dig-
 ' nity of this house require. All these are in-
 ' citements, that influence me to second every
 ' motion that may contribute to detect the dark
 ' transactions, and mean practices, that have
 ' brought so much misery upon the nation.
 ' And we can succeed in this no way so pro-
 ' bably, as by seeing the papers and materials
 ' that have gone thro' the hands of the princi-
 ' pal agent.

' I am sorry, Sir, to see that there is at pre-
 ' sent so little probability of obtaining this satis-
 ' faction, and that the nation has so small a
 ' prospect of being able to bring the authors of
 ' all her misfortunes to justice. I am sorry to
 ' see gentlemen presume so far upon an indul-
 ' gent majority, which they have secured to
 ' their own interests, as to advance arguments
 ' in this house, which they themselves must be
 ' conscious have no manner of foundation, ei-
 ' ther in reason or fact. Can the honourable
 ' gentleman, who spoke last, imagine that the
 ' house was so weak as to believe he was serious
 ' in what he said, and that all he wanted was
 ' not

‘ not to gain a little time, and to quash the
‘ motion after some appearance of a debate?
‘ Why don’t gentlemen rather declare in plain
‘ terms, that they reject a motion because it dis-
‘ pleases them? It would be shewing, Sir, a
‘ greater regard for the honour of the house,
‘ than, after keeping up the solemn farce of a ri-
‘ diculous debate, to give a negative to a ques-
‘ tion against the conviction of their own minds,
‘ and every principle of common sense.

‘ Could the honourable gentleman imagine
‘ that the house thought him in earnest, when
‘ he said that the faction here had encouraged
‘ the *Spaniards* to continue their insolence till
‘ they made it necessary for his Majesty to have
‘ recourse to arms? The faction here, as he is
‘ pleased to call the whole body of the people,
‘ and almost every independent man in the na-
‘ tion, have always declar’d for a war with
‘ *Spain*; they have dreaded nothing, they still
‘ dread nothing, so much as a peace: Then
‘ how consistent is it to imagine that the *Spani-*
‘ *ards* would so far gratify their open enemies,
‘ the body of the nation, and so far disoblige
‘ their steady friends, the ministry, as to force
‘ us into a war, notwithstanding the unwearied
‘ efforts of thir kind adherents! There is some-
‘ thing, Sir, so ridiculous in this stale argument,
‘ that it is surprizing a gentleman should either
‘ hear it, or repeat it with a grave air. The
‘ *Spanish* manifesto indeed does use the expres-
‘ sion mentioned by the honourable gentleman,
‘ but it is very easy to perceive with what views.
‘ It is, Sir, in order to palliate their own injus-
‘ tice, and their open contempt of our ministry,
‘ that they represent it as the effect of the cla-
‘ mours of the people here, that both the nati-
‘ ons were forced into a war. Sir, I believe, if
‘ we consult all histories, even those of the most
‘ absolute

‘ absolute empires, we shall find no people ever
 ‘ suffered greater hardships, ever bore them
 ‘ more patiently, or ever had recourse to more
 ‘ dutiful and legal measures for their redress. It
 ‘ was not, Sir, upon the lowest class of men,
 ‘ upon the scum of the people, that these hard-
 ‘ ships fell, but upon men of reputation, and
 ‘ fortune; men, Sir, to whom the nation is
 ‘ more indebted for every shadow of advantage
 ‘ that she enjoys, than to the minister, with all
 ‘ his auxiliaries, followers and dependents. They
 ‘ had recourse to Parliament; the Parliament
 ‘ came to resolutions in their favour, which for-
 ‘ ced the ministry upon the perplexing choice of
 ‘ either carrying on their schemes in direct op-
 ‘ position to these resolutions, or of making war
 ‘ upon *Spain*, who continued obstinate in her re-
 ‘ fusal to do us justice. The first, Sir, was a
 ‘ measure which they durst not venture upon;
 ‘ therefore, against their will, they were dragged
 ‘ into the other.

‘ As to what the honourable gentleman said
 ‘ about the probability of our disobliging *France*,
 ‘ or any of our neighbours, if we should agree
 ‘ to this motion, that argument, if it can be
 ‘ called an argument, proves either nothing at
 ‘ all, or it proves too much. For why, Sir,
 ‘ should we be afraid to assert or exercise an un-
 ‘ doubted right, lest it should provoke any o-
 ‘ ther power? The safety of the nation, Sir,
 ‘ and the service we do to his Majesty, by de-
 ‘ tecting offenders, ought to take place of all
 ‘ other considerations; and if we never shall
 ‘ take a step before we are sure that it will not
 ‘ be disagreeable to *France*, we had as good
 ‘ humbly desire them to send over an intendant,
 ‘ who shall direct and controul our counsels.
 ‘ Our fear of offending *France*, Sir, was, I re-
 ‘ member, a main argument, very frequent with
 ‘ gentlemen,

‘ gentlemen, to prove that we ought not to enter into this war at all. Necessity however got the better of our fears, and we don’t find that *France* resents it, at least she does not appear disposed to declare her anger. And if we risk’d her friendship upon the declaration of war, shall we be afraid that she will resent our desiring such papers as are absolutely necessary to the service of the nation? Sir, I don’t see any one question that can come before this house, to which this argument may not be as properly apply’d, as it is in the present case; for I believe we can do nothing more offensive to *France*, than to pursue the true interest of *England*.

‘ As to the objection, which supposes that the papers contain several passages, which may be improper to be exposed to the observation of the publick; this argument is of a piece with the other. If we knew, Sir, what they contain’d, we should not be under such a necessity of calling for them. But how is it possible, Sir, that any power in *Europe*, unless she is obstinately bent to quarrel with us, should take it amiss that we call for the papers that have pass’d thro’ the hands of our ministers, and been laid before those of *Spain*? How can that affect them? The honourable gentleman sure could not be in earnest, when he brought an instance from private life to prove that it might; therefore I shall be at no pains to answer that part of his speech, because I am persuaded that neither he nor the house expect I should. In short, Sir, the motion is so reasonable, and so indispensable with our duty, that I shall say no more, but that I hope the majority of the house will agree, with me, that it ought to be admitted.’

The

The question being put, it was upon a division carried in the negative, noes 172, yeas 98.

As soon as this division was over, *William Pulteney*, Esq; stood up, and spoke in substance thus.

Mr. Pulteney's speech and motion for papers.

‘ Mr. Speaker,
 ‘ Sir, Altho’ the success of the last motion
 ‘ must be a discouragement to any gentleman to
 ‘ make a motion in this house, which he thinks
 ‘ will not be approved by the minister, yet, as
 ‘ I am resolved always to do my duty as a mem-
 ‘ ber of this house, without regard to the suc-
 ‘ cess I may meet with, as I am resolved to con-
 ‘ sider only what may be agreeable to the people
 ‘ I represent, and what they may justly expect,
 ‘ without regard to its being agreeable or dis-
 ‘ agreeable to a minister, I shall beg leave to
 ‘ make you a motion, which, I think, is not li-
 ‘ able to the objection made against the last, and
 ‘ therefore, I hope, it will meet with a happier
 ‘ fate. For these two last sessions, Sir, this
 ‘ house, and the whole nation, were entertained
 ‘ and amused with the strongest assurances, that
 ‘ the negotiations then carrying on with the
 ‘ court of *Spain*, would at last end in a safe and
 ‘ honourable peace. This would have been a
 ‘ good end, an end for which we had reason to
 ‘ negotiate, and an end which every good man
 ‘ wished to see, tho’ very few expected it; but
 ‘ as, during the whole time of these negotia-
 ‘ tions, we were put to a great expence, and suf-
 ‘ fering many of the calamities of a real war,
 ‘ we ought not to have continued our negotia-
 ‘ tions, unless we had very good grounds to ex-
 ‘ pect a speedy and happy issue; and in the
 ‘ mean time, those squadrons, which the nation
 ‘ was

‘ was put to the expence of fitting out, ought
‘ to have been employ’d in protecting our trade,
‘ from those warlike insults which, under peace-
‘ ful pretences, were frequently put upon the
‘ trade and navigation of this kingdom.

‘ If our negotiations had ended in a safe and
‘ honourable peace, as we were often assured
‘ they would, the people would have concluded,
‘ that those hopes upon which we had for so
‘ many years continued our negotiations, were
‘ well founded, and the fruits of an honourable
‘ peace and flourishing trade would have made
‘ them forget the injuries they had suffered, and
‘ the dangers they had been exposed to. Like
‘ a weary traveller, they would have rejoiced in
‘ the warmth and convenience of their quarters,
‘ and would have forgot the toils and the dan-
‘ gers of that long and tedious circuit, they had
‘ been obliged to make, in order to come safely
‘ to their lodging. But as our negotiations have
‘ now taken a quite different turn, the people
‘ neither can suppose, that we had ever any
‘ well-grounded hopes of success by negotiation,
‘ nor can they forget the insults they were ex-
‘ posed to, and the injuries they suffered, by
‘ the continuance of these hopeless negotiations.
‘ They not only conclude, that we continued to
‘ negotiate after being deprived of all hopes of
‘ success in that way, but that very little care
‘ was taken, in the mean time, to protect our
‘ trade from those dangers and inconveniencies it
‘ was exposed to, by these very negotiations.

‘ If these conclusions are wrong, Sir, if our
‘ hopes of success by negotiation were well
‘ founded, and proper care taken to protect our
‘ trade in the mean time, I am sure the Parlia-
‘ ment cannot do a more effectual service to the
‘ administration, than to enquire into the grounds
‘ upon which our ministers continued to nego-
‘ tiate,

' tiate, and into the care they took to protect
 ' our trade, while they thus continued to nego-
 ' tiate; and as no such enquiry can be made,
 ' without having all the necessary papers and
 ' materials before us, I hope, in the motion I
 ' am to make, I shall have the concurrence of
 ' every gentlemam concerned in the administra-
 ' tion; for when a man is blamed or accused,
 ' either by a private person, or by the publick
 ' voice of his country, I am always willing to
 ' suppose him innocent, unless he gives me rea-
 ' son to suspect him guilty, by his industriously
 ' avoiding a fair enquiry into his conduct. For
 ' this reason, I say, Sir, I hope, I shall have
 ' the concurrence of every gentleman concerned
 ' in the administration; for I shall be sorry to
 ' find them, by their opposition within doors,
 ' justifying and confirming the scandalous con-
 ' clusions that are made against them without.

' But, Sir, whatever reception my motion
 ' may meet with from those concerned in the
 ' administration, I am sure it is a motion that
 ' will be agreeable to every man, who has no
 ' share in the administration, nor any particular
 ' dependence upon it; and it is a motion which
 ' every man, that has suffered by our negotia-
 ' tions, or may suffer by the war, has a right to
 ' have complied with. When any great misfor-
 ' tune is brought upon the nation, the people
 ' expect, they ought to be informed, how that
 ' misfortune came to be brought upon them.
 ' This information they cannot expect from
 ' those concern'd in the management of our na-
 ' tional affairs: They will not rest satisfied with
 ' any accounts they can give, and in this they
 ' are in the right, because those that are con-
 ' cerned in the conduct of publick affairs may
 ' be, and are often, the chief cause of the pub-
 ' lick misfortune. In all such cases, it is from
 ' Parlia-

‘ Parliament the people expect information, it is
‘ from the Parliament only they can expect sa-
‘ tisfaction. It is for this they send us here;
‘ and if we do not give the people this satisfac-
‘ tion by a fair and impartial enquiry into the
‘ causes of the misfortune, we neglect one of
‘ the chief ends of our meeting in this house.
‘ I hope it will be granted, that war is at all
‘ times, and to every nation, a very great mis-
‘ fortune: It is not yet a twelvemonth ago,
‘ since it was represented as such a terrible mis-
‘ fortune, that a nation ought to submit to the
‘ most cruel indignities, the most tedious nego-
‘ tiations, the most scandalous convention, ra-
‘ ther than involve itself in a war. I did not
‘ then, I do not now, look upon war in such a
‘ terrible light; but yet I look upon it as a mis-
‘ fortune, which no man ought to involve his
‘ country in, if it can be avoided; and there-
‘ fore, if there be any amongst ourselves who,
‘ by their folly, have involved us in this misfor-
‘ tune, their conduct ought to be enquired into,
‘ and their persons removed from our councils,
‘ that the nation may not suffer a second time
‘ by their folly; for if we do not remove such
‘ men from our councils, they may bring us
‘ into a second misfortune, ten times worse than
‘ the first.

‘ This, Sir, is what the people are afraid of:
‘ They feel the misfortune of the war, and, I
‘ fear, will feel it severely before it can be
‘ brought to an honourable conclusion: They
‘ suspect, we have been led into it by the weak-
‘ ness of our own conduct: By not understand-
‘ ing our own rights, or not representing them
‘ in a proper manner to the court of *Spain*, that
‘ court, they suspect, has been encouraged to
‘ form new pretensions against us; and that by
‘ mean concessions in former treaties, and by too
‘ Vol. XIX. E patiently

‘ patiently and too long submitting to indigni-
‘ ties, we at last made that court believe, that
‘ nothing could provoke us to declare war a-
‘ gainst them. This is suspected by most men
‘ in the nation to be the remote cause of the
‘ present war ; and for removing or confirming
‘ their suspicions, they expect, they justly ex-
‘ pect a fair and impartial enquiry into the con-
‘ duct of our publick affairs. If by this en-
‘ quiry we remove these suspicions, we do jus-
‘ tice to our ministers ; if thereby we find them
‘ confirmed, I hope we shall do justice to the
‘ nation.

‘ The people, Sir, have long suffered, and
‘ greatly : Our ships have been seized, our mer-
‘ chants often plundered, our seamen long treated
‘ in the most cruel manner, by a nation we could
‘ have crushed to atoms, if we had properly
‘ and seasonably made use of our power. The
‘ people expect to see a reason given for making
‘ them suffer so long ; especially, since the rea-
‘ son hitherto given, appears now to be no rea-
‘ son at all. Every one knows, that our mer-
‘ chants and seamen have been complaining of
‘ the depredations committed upon them by the
‘ *Spaniards*, for this dozen of years past. Du-
‘ ring all that time we have been in a continual
‘ course of negotiation, and the sufferers have
‘ always been told with great confidence, that
‘ our reason for not putting an end to their suf-
‘ ferings by a declaration of war, was the cer-
‘ tain hopes we had of putting an end to them
‘ by a treaty of peace. This now appears to
‘ have been a very insufficient reason ; and it
‘ cannot be said, it was less convenient, or less
‘ safe for us to have declared war, or issued re-
‘ prizals, against *Spain*, ten or a dozen years a-
‘ go, than it was in the month of *June* last ; for
‘ the affairs of *Europe* were never in so unlucky

‘ a situation for this kingdom, as they were at
‘ that time, nor was the power of *Spain* then
‘ less, or the power of this nation then more
‘ considerable, than for twenty years preceding.
‘ Nay, the power of *Spain* was last *June* more
‘ considerable than it had been for a dozen of
‘ years before, because they had in that time
‘ made large additions to their navy, and had
‘ united themselves more firmly to the court of
‘ *France*: Whereas we had made no addition to
‘ our strength: We had relieved our people
‘ from none of the taxes they groaned under,
‘ nor paid off any considerable part of our na-
‘ tional debt; and by our conduct we had in
‘ that time detached from us every useful ally
‘ we had, or could have in the world. There-
‘ fore, I must conclude, that last summer was
‘ the worst of any preceding time for this na-
‘ tion to engage in a war; from whence it is na-
‘ tural to suppose, and the whole nation does
‘ suppose, that neither our former pacifick, nor
‘ our present warlike measures proceeded from
‘ any national concern, but from some motives
‘ of a private nature, which we ought, and cer-
‘ tainly will enquire into, if we shew a due re-
‘ gard either to our country or constituents.

‘ Another, and, I think, a very strong rea-
‘ son, Sir, for our enquiring into the causes of
‘ the war is, the confidence with which the
‘ court of *Spain* has publicly asserted, that the
‘ war is owing to a breach of stipulations on the
‘ part of this nation. It is, indeed, lucky for
‘ us, that *Spain* took from thence an occasion
‘ not to perform her part of the last scandalous
‘ treaty we made with her; for the last is far
‘ from being the first scandalous treaty we have
‘ lately made with that nation. It is lucky for
‘ us, the *Spaniards* refused to pay the 95,000*l.*
‘ stipulated by the late convention; for if they

' had made that payment at the time appointed,
 ' we should have been pinned down to a new
 ' ten years negotiation, during which time their
 ' *Guarda Costa's* would have had a sort of new
 ' indulgence to have plundered our merchants,
 ' and by that means they would soon have reim-
 ' burs'd themselves the sum they paid for that
 ' indulgence. But as the reasons given by *Spain*,
 ' for not making that payment, are founded on
 ' breaches of conditions on our part; as those
 ' conditions are such as were never ratified by
 ' his Majesty; and as they have never yet been
 ' denied by any publick authority in this king-
 ' dom, they ought certainly to be enquired into
 ' by Parliament, for vindicating the honour of
 ' our ministers, if they are innocent, and for
 ' vindicating the honour of his Majesty and the
 ' nation, by punishing them, or sending them
 ' over in fetters to the enemy, if they are
 ' guilty.

' In short, Sir, to have suffered so long and
 ' so much, in hopes of a peace, and yet at last
 ' to find ourselves in a war, and that at a time
 ' the most inconvenient, the most dangerous for
 ' this nation, affords such presumptions against
 ' the wisdom of those that have lately con-
 ' ducted our publick affairs, and has raised such
 ' a general suspicion and distrust among the peo-
 ' ple, that in duty to our country, in duty to
 ' our Sovereign, and, I hope, in justice to those
 ' who have been concerned, we ought to make
 ' strict enquiry into our late negotiations with
 ' *Spain*. Whoever may be to blame, we are
 ' very certain, both from the nature of our con-
 ' stitution, and the knowledge we have of his
 ' Majesty's wisdom and goodness, that he can
 ' have no share in it; and, therefore, when ge-
 ' neral suspicions and complaints are rais'd a-
 ' mong the people, it is the duty, it is one of
 ' the

‘ the great uses of Parliaments, to enquire into
‘ the grounds of themt in order, either to con-
‘ vince the people that there is no solid ground
‘ for such suspicions or complaints, or to recon-
‘ cile them to their Sovereign, by detecting and
‘ punishing the guilty, or at least by preventing
‘ their having any farther concern in advising or
‘ conducting our publick affairs. This, I say,
‘ is at all times the duty of Parliament, but e-
‘ specially when the nation is just entered into
‘ an expensive and dangerous war, and a war
‘ too, which a great part of the people believe
‘ to be owing to the tedious perplext negotiati-
‘ ons we have for so many years been carrying
‘ on at the court of *Spain*, and the tame submis-
‘ sions we have made to the repeated insults of
‘ that haughty nation.

‘ Can the nation, Sir, expect a prudent or a
‘ vigorous prosecution of the war from those
‘ who, they believe, have been guilty of so
‘ much imprudence and weakness in time of
‘ peace? Can our soldiers or sailors act with
‘ courage or vigour, when they are diffident of
‘ the conduct of those, who are their chief di-
‘ rectors? Can our people pay with pleasure
‘ their taxes, when the chief management and
‘ application is to be intrusted to those, in
‘ whose conduct they can put no trust? Sir, if we
‘ expect success in the war, if we expect to put
‘ a speedy and an honourable end to it, we must
‘ remove the present suspicions of the people,
‘ or remove those that have caused them; and
‘ neither of these can be done, but by a fair, an
‘ impartial, and a strict parliamentary enquiry
‘ into our late conduct, especially that part of
‘ it which relates to our transactions with the
‘ court of *Spain*. This enquiry we have a right,
‘ and are, in duty to our Sovereign, as well as
‘ our constituents, bound to make; and this en-

' quiry will, I hope, turn out to the advantage
 ' and honour of those that have been concerned.
 ' I hope we shall be able to remove the suspi-
 ' ons of the people, by shewing them, that all
 ' our late transactions with *Spain* have been car-
 ' ried on with wisdom, steadiness, and perspi-
 ' cuity; but this cannot be done, unless we
 ' have laid before us all those papers that are
 ' necessary for giving us a thorough insight into
 ' those transactions; for if the proper materials
 ' are denied, the people will not believe, that
 ' we are either serious or impartial in our en-
 ' quiry; and in that case, instead of removing
 ' their suspicions, with regard to our ministers,
 ' we shall render them discontented, nay despe-
 ' rate, as well as diffident, by giving them a
 ' suspicion of the integrity of their representa-
 ' tives.

' For this reason, Sir, I shall conclude with
 ' moving, That, &c. (as mentioned in the se-
 ' cond question.)

The next that spoke upon this question was
Horatio Walpole, Esq; the purport of whose speech
 was thus.

Mr. Wal-
 pole's speech.

' Mr. Speaker,
 ' Sir, I must think, that gentlemen give
 ' themselves a very unnecessary trouble, when,
 ' upon this occasion, or any occasion of the like
 ' nature, they talk to us of the right we have to
 ' enquire into the conduct of any publick mea-
 ' sure. In former times, this right may, per-
 ' haps, have been denied, by the parasites of
 ' Princes who aimed at arbitrary power. But it
 ' is a right that has never, of late years, been
 ' denied: It has never been, I believe, so much
 ' as insinuated by any gentleman now in this
 ' house, that we have not such a right, or that
 ' it

‘ it ought not to be exercised upon every pro-
‘ per occasion. But, as parliamentary enquiries
‘ into the conduct of those that are employed
‘ by the crown, are generally the cause of great
‘ ferment in the nation, especially when they
‘ are directed against those in high stations, and
‘ as such enquiries are always dangerous as well
‘ as troublesome, even to the best and most
‘ faithful servants of the crown, they ought not
‘ to be set on foot, but when there is an abso-
‘ lute and apparent necessity for so doing. We
‘ may remember, the very last enquiry that was
‘ set on foot, raised such a ferment in the na-
‘ tion, as, at last, ended in a dangerous and de-
‘ structive civil war. That enquiry was abso-
‘ lutely and apparently necessary; but necessary
‘ as it was, if we had, at that time, been en-
‘ gaged in a foreign war, I should have been for
‘ putting it off till the conclusion of the war;
‘ for, if the disaffected or discontented party,
‘ call them which you will, could have had any
‘ foreign assistance, they might, perhaps, have
‘ been able to have turned the tables, and in-
‘ stead of having their conduct enquired into
‘ and punished as it deserved, they might have
‘ enquired into and punished the conduct of
‘ those who had so justly set up an enquiry into
‘ theirs.

‘ All such enquiries, Sir, must therefore be
‘ allowed to be of dangerous consequence to the
‘ tranquillity of the nation; and, if we consider
‘ by whom such enquiries are generally set on
‘ foot and carried on, we must allow, that they
‘ are not only troublesome, but dangerous, to
‘ the persons whose conduct is enquired into.
‘ They are generally set on foot by the personal
‘ enemies of those in the administration, and
‘ are usually carried on with a zeal for condemn-
‘ ing, which stifles every sentiment of compas-
‘ sion,

‘ fion, and makes human frailties appear to be
‘ monstrous crimes. I shall grant, Sir, that it
‘ is a great advantage to a person accused, either
‘ by a private informer, or by a publick report,
‘ to be legally tried, and fairly acquitted ; yet,
‘ nevertheless, I believe, no such person would
‘ chuse to put himself upon his trial, if he could
‘ conveniently avoid it ; for even the most inno-
‘ cent may, by some accident or mistake, be
‘ condemned, and therefore a prudent man, let
‘ his innocence be never so apparent, will always
‘ chuse to vindicate his character by some other
‘ method, rather than run the risk of a legal
‘ and formal trial. For this reason, Sir, I shall
‘ be no way surprized, if I find the friends of
‘ those who were concerned in our late negotia-
‘ tions with *Spain*, opposing any parliamentary
‘ enquiry into those negotiations ; especially as I
‘ am convinced, whatever some gentlemen may
‘ please to suggest, that there was not one wrong
‘ step made in the whole course of that trans-
‘ action.

‘ I presume, Sir, it will appear from what I
‘ have said, that no parliamentary enquiry ought
‘ ever to be set on foot, but when there is an ab-
‘ solute and apparent necessity for so doing ; and
‘ therefore, I shall next observe, that there ne-
‘ ver can be such a necessity, but when there
‘ appears to have been a flagrant error in some
‘ part of the conduct of our publick affairs. A
‘ national misfortune is no just cause for a parlia-
‘ mentary enquiry, unless there be ground to be-
‘ lieve, that it was owing to the crime, the neg-
‘ lect, or the weakness of those who were con-
‘ cerned in advising or conducting our publick
‘ affairs. I shall most readily admit, that war is
‘ a great misfortune to any nation ; and that it
‘ is a greater misfortune to a trading nation,
‘ than to any other : To which I must add, that
‘ to

‘ to this nation, I believe, it is a greater misfortune to be involved in a war with *Spain*, than with any other nation in *Europe*. But this is so far from being a reason for an enquiry, that it is a justification of the pacifick measures so long pursued by the administration. Their avoiding a war as long as possible, their endeavouring, as much as they could, to bring matters to an accommodation, is, in my opinion, a manifestation of their prudence, and of their stedfast regard for the trade and happiness of their country. Suppose it true, which I have good reason to believe is far from being the case, that the *Spaniards* were so wrong-headed as to look upon our regard to ourselves, as a sign of our fear of them, could this be called a weakness in those who had the management of our affairs, especially as they have now convinced the *Spaniards* of their error? And, if the court of *Spain* did really fall into such an error, I hope, the event of the present war will be a lasting memorial for that nation, never to fall into such another.

‘ Thus, Sir, I think, it is evident, that our present misfortune of being engaged in a war with *Spain*, can be no reason for setting up a parliamentary enquiry into our late transactions with that nation, unless it should be said, that we made unreasonable demands upon them, or entered precipitately into the war, neither of which, I believe, will be expressly alledged by any of those gentlemen who now seem so fond of parliamentary enquiries, tho’ the honourable gentleman has been pleased to insinuate something like it; for, I must think, a war is precipitately entered into, if it is begun at the very worst time that could have been chosen for that purpose. I cannot, however, be of his opinion: I cannot think, that last summer

‘ was

‘ was the worst, or the most improper time we
 ‘ could have chosen for entering into a war, or
 ‘ ordering reprizals, against *Spain*. The addi-
 ‘ tions made by *Spain* to its navy, we knew,
 ‘ could be of no signification in a war against
 ‘ this nation; and tho’ the courts of *France* and
 ‘ *Spain* have been of late more firmly united
 ‘ than they were about fifteen years ago; yet
 ‘ that union will not, I hope, prevail with *France*
 ‘ to assist the *Spaniards* in an unjust war against
 ‘ us; but, if it should, it is not to be imputed
 ‘ to any error in our conduct, but to the present
 ‘ circumstances of the two courts; for whilst the
 ‘ present King of *Spain* lives, it is natural to
 ‘ suppose, that there will be an union between
 ‘ the two; and this is another very strong argu-
 ‘ ment for justifying the length, or if gentlemen
 ‘ please, the tediousness of our negotiations; be-
 ‘ cause, if the present King of *Spain* had, in the
 ‘ mean time, happened to die, we should pro-
 ‘ bably have found that court more flexible, and
 ‘ more inclined to come to a friendly accommo-
 ‘ dation with us. But, as that event did not
 ‘ happen, and as it became at last absolutely ne-
 ‘ cessary for us to vindicate our rights by force
 ‘ of arms, we were obliged to take our fate, let
 ‘ who would declare against us; for, let the situ-
 ‘ ation of affairs in *Europe* be what it will, I
 ‘ hope, it will always be the happiness of this
 ‘ nation to find proper and powerful allies upon
 ‘ the continent, as soon as we have occasion for
 ‘ them. But, I must observe, Sir, that the best
 ‘ method to have good allies, is to shew them,
 ‘ we can stand upon our own legs; for, if they
 ‘ should suppose, we cannot do without them,
 ‘ they will of course impose harder terms upon
 ‘ us, than they could otherwise think of.

‘ With regard to our own conduct therefore,
 ‘ I do not think, there is the least ground for

‘ suspecting it of any weakness, either in the ne-
‘ gotiations that preceded the war, or in the
‘ time we chose for commencing it; and conse-
‘ quently there can be no necessity for an enqui-
‘ ry. I, indeed, never heard of a parliamentary
‘ enquiry into publick measures, unless they were
‘ such as had been first censured by Parliament.
‘ Can this, Sir, be alledged against any part of
‘ our negotiations with *Spain*? Those negotia-
‘ tions did at last end in a treaty: That treaty
‘ was approved of by Parliament. If it had
‘ been censured, there would then have been
‘ good reason for enquiring into the negotiations
‘ by which it was concluded; but, so far other-
‘ wise, it was approved of, and justly approved
‘ of, by both houses, in my opinion, whatever
‘ some other gentlemen might think of it. By
‘ that treaty, a reparation for the damages our
‘ merchants have suffered was expressly promised;
‘ and a proper provision was made for prevent-
‘ ing any search in time to come. This was all
‘ we could desire, and the consequence has
‘ shewn, it was a good treaty for this nation:
‘ The *Spaniards* thought it so good for us,
‘ that they afterwards refused to perform their
‘ part of it; and this is the true and the sole
‘ cause of the present war; therefore, I am sur-
‘ prized, any gentleman should pretend to be
‘ ignorant of the cause of this war, or that a
‘ parliamentary enquiry is necessary for informing
‘ any man in the kingdom what was the cause of
‘ the war.

‘ Whatever doubts some gentlemen within
‘ doors may have, however much they may
‘ refine, about the remote cause of the war, I
‘ am persuaded, Sir, no gentleman, or at least
‘ very few, without doors, pretend to doubt of
‘ the court of *Spain*’s being the sole cause of the
‘ war, by refusing to fulfil that convention they
‘ had

‘ had so lately, and so solemnly agreed to. And,
‘ I am as fully persuaded, that with regard to
‘ the negotiations which ended in that treaty,
‘ there are no complaints without doors amongst
‘ men of figure and sense, except such as are pre-
‘ judiced by their passions, or such as are disaf-
‘ fected to his Majesty, and consequently ready
‘ to find fault with every thing done by his ser-
‘ vants. If there are any complaints without
‘ doors, they are wholly among the vulgar, the
‘ ignorant, the prejudiced, and the disaffected;
‘ and if this house were to shew so great a re-
‘ gard to the complaints of such men, as to en-
‘ ter into a parliamentary enquiry, in order to
‘ convince or satisfy them, we should never be
‘ able to do any thing else but enquire, nor
‘ would such enquiries ever convince or satisfy
‘ them, but, on the contrary, would afford them
‘ new matter for complaint.

‘ Therefore, Sir, whatever right we may have
‘ to enquire, however much it may be our duty
‘ to enquire into publick transactions, we are at
‘ present under no necessity, nor have we any
‘ occasion to take up our time with enquiries.
‘ But even suppose an enquiry were necessary,
‘ yet it may be prudent to delay going upon it
‘ for some time; and this, I think, is the case
‘ with regard to the enquiry now proposed. Sup-
‘ pose it were necessary to enquire into our ne-
‘ gotiations with *Spain* antecedent to the conven-
‘ tion, it would, I think, be very imprudent to
‘ go upon it in this session of Parliament; be-
‘ cause it would be necessary to have several pa-
‘ pers laid before us, which it would be most
‘ imprudent to make publick, as every paper
‘ must be, that is laid before such a numerous
‘ assembly. Whether the papers now moved
‘ for may be necessary for an enquiry into our
‘ late negotiations with *Spain*, I shall not deter-
‘ mine;

‘ mine ; but this I may with confidence affirm,
‘ that the laying of all the letters and instruc-
‘ tions moved for, before this assembly, might
‘ be attended with most fatal consequences to the
‘ nation.

‘ We all know, Sir, that the *Spaniards* lay the
‘ whole blame of the war upon us, by pretend-
‘ ing, we were the first that broke the conven-
‘ tion. Their pretences, indeed, are so weak,
‘ and so apparently ill-founded, that they do not
‘ deserve an answer, and far less the notice of
‘ this house ; but if this motion should be a-
‘ greed to, and complied with by his Majesty,
‘ the letters and instructions thereby called for,
‘ might afford the *Spaniards* some plausible
‘ grounds, at least more plausible than any they
‘ have yet alledged, for saying, it was this na-
‘ tion that first violated the convention. If from
‘ these papers it should appear, that hostile in-
‘ structions were sent to any of our sea-command-
‘ ers, or to any of our governors, tho’ it should
‘ appear at the same time, that those instructions
‘ were conditional, and not to be carried into
‘ execution, unless the court of *Spain* should re-
‘ fuse such or such a reasonable demand, yet that
‘ court would from thence argue, that we had
‘ dealt deceitfully, or not candidly, by them ;
‘ because it from thence appeared, that we had
‘ been preparing to attack them, at the very
‘ time we were treating with them. Besides this,
‘ there are many other circumstances might ap-
‘ pear from the papers and instructions now
‘ called for, which might give the court of *Spain*
‘ some colour, tho’ no real ground, for laying
‘ the blame of the war at our door ; and as we
‘ do not know what effect these colourable pre-
‘ tences might have upon foreign courts, all of
‘ whom now look upon the war, as owing to the
‘ obstinacy of the *Spaniards* alone, we ought not,
‘ I

‘ I think, in prudence, to call for any papers
‘ that may probably furnish our enemies with
‘ such pretences.

‘ Another fatal consequence that may proba-
‘ bly arise from having these papers laid before
‘ us, is a discovery of those designs that are now
‘ to be executed against the enemy. Let us con-
‘ sider, Sir, the circumstances the nation was in
‘ last year. His Majesty was by the advice of
‘ his Parliament to make a last attempt for ac-
‘ commodating our differences with *Spain* in an
‘ amicable manner: For this purpose, he was
‘ to make a peremptory demand of every thing
‘ we had a right to insist on; and for making
‘ this demand effectual, or at least to give it its
‘ due weight, he sent Admiral *Haddock* with a
‘ squadron into the *Mediterranean*, and Commo-
‘ dore *Brown* with another to the *West-Indies*, in
‘ order to shew the court of *Spain*, that we were
‘ resolved to begin hostilities, if they attempted
‘ to quibble with us any longer. This had the
‘ desired effect: It produced the convention, by
‘ which, as I have said, we obtained all we could
‘ desire. We must suppose, that these squa-
‘ drons were furnished with instructions for be-
‘ ginning hostilities, in case the court of *Spain*
‘ had absolutely refused to treat with us upon a
‘ reasonable footing; and consequently we must
‘ suppose, that in these instructions there were
‘ schemes laid down, how our squadrons were to
‘ begin the attack, and where they were to make
‘ the first hostile attempt upon the enemy. As
‘ *Spain* submitted, and concluded a most rea-
‘ sonable treaty with us, there was then no occa-
‘ sion for carrying any of those schemes or de-
‘ signs into execution; but now that *Spain* has,
‘ by adding breach of faith to her former obsti-
‘ nacy, obliged us to begin the war, these
‘ schemes or designs, or some of them, must
‘ now

‘ now be carried into execution ; and before this
‘ is done, I am sure it would be very imprudent
‘ to discover them to the enemy, which would
‘ be the certain consequence of having the letters
‘ and instructions now called for, laid before us.
‘ We should thereby give *Spain* an opportunity
‘ of providing against every attack we can make,
‘ and of taking all possible means for rendering
‘ our designs against them abortive.

‘ Sir, whatever opinion the people without
‘ doors may have of the past conduct of those,
‘ who have the direction of our publick affairs,
‘ I am certain, they would have no good opinion
‘ of, nor any confidence in their future conduct,
‘ should they agree to this motion, or advise his
‘ Majesty to comply with it; I must, therefore,
‘ be of opinion, that, should we agree to the
‘ address proposed, his Majesty would find him-
‘ self under a necessity of refusing our request;
‘ and as I am very well assured, that his Majesty
‘ will never refuse any reasonable request that
‘ can be made to him by his Parliament, I shall
‘ always be against making any request, which,
‘ I think, he cannot in prudence, or consistently
‘ with the welfare of his kingdoms, fully com-
‘ ply with. The address proposed, I hope, I
‘ have shewn to be a request of this nature; this
‘ is the light I view it in; and this is a most
‘ substantial reason for my giving a negative to
‘ the motion.’

The next that spoke was *Edmund Waller*, Esq;
whose speech was in substance thus.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, I shall readily admit, that the rights Mr. Waller's
speech.
‘ and privileges of Parliament have not of late
‘ years been so much disputed by our ministers,
‘ as they were formerly, and if it were neces-
‘ sary,

' fary, I could give a very good reason for this
 ' complaisance on the part of our ministers; but
 ' the acknowledging of our right to enquire
 ' will signify but little, if it should ever come
 ' to be in the power of ministers, to prevail
 ' with a majority of this house, to put a nega-
 ' tive upon every question that tends to an en-
 ' quiry. This, I hope, is not now our case;
 ' but I must observe, that for many years past,
 ' either our ministers have been extremely good,
 ' or our Parliaments extremely complaisant; for
 ' there has been no regular parliamentary en-
 ' quiry into the conduct of any one minister,
 ' whilst he continued to be so; and if no mini-
 ' ster's conduct is ever to be examined by Parlia-
 ' ment, till after he is given up by the crown,
 ' I cannot think, that parliamentary enquiries
 ' will ever be of any great service to the nation.
 ' The honourable gentleman that spoke last, has
 ' been so good as to acknowledge our right to
 ' enquire into the conduct of publick affairs;
 ' but if the arguments he has been pleased to
 ' make use of upon this occasion, be allowed to
 ' be of any weight, I am sure, no parliamentary
 ' enquiry into a minister's conduct can ever be
 ' set on foot, because they will be of equal
 ' weight against every future enquiry, and every
 ' motion that may tend to that end.

' The honourable gentleman is pleased to say,
 ' we ought never to enquire, but when there ap-
 ' pears to have been a flagrant error in the con-
 ' duct of our publick affairs. Sir, how is this
 ' error to appear, if we are never to have laid
 ' before us any papers that relate to the late con-
 ' duct of our publick affairs? Does not every
 ' gentleman see, that the end of an enquiry is
 ' here mistaken for the cause? A general suspi-
 ' cion, therefore, must always be a good cause,
 ' and this is what gave occasion for the present
 ' motion.

‘ motion. There is at present the strongest rea-
‘ son to suspect most egregious errors in the late
‘ conduct of our publick affairs, and we desire
‘ to have the papers now moved for laid before
‘ us, that we may from thence point out the er-
‘ rors our ministers may have been guilty of, or
‘ remove the suspicions which are now so gene-
‘ ral, and which may have been unjustly con-
‘ ceived. But I will go farther: I will affirm
‘ that, if our ministers have been guilty of no
‘ error in their late conduct, they have at least
‘ been guilty of a most egregious mistake. They
‘ declared, with the greatest assurance, for seve-
‘ ral years together, that they had reason to
‘ hope for a happy issue from their pacifick ne-
‘ gotiations. Does it not now evidently appear,
‘ that they were mistaken? And as I can disco-
‘ ver no material difference between an error and
‘ a mistake, I must therefore think, that from
‘ the honourable gentleman’s own argument,
‘ there is an absolute and apparent necessity for
‘ enquiring into our late conduct; and if there
‘ be a necessity for examining our late conduct,
‘ we ought to have all papers before us, that
‘ may any way contribute to our information.

‘ Whether we ought, or ought not to enquire
‘ into the late conduct of our publick affairs, is
‘ therefore, I think, a question that can admit
‘ of no dispute, and, I think, it has not been
‘ said, that the papers called for are not neces-
‘ sary for our information. But we are told,
‘ they cannot be laid before us, because the se-
‘ crets of our government would thereby be dis-
‘ covered to our enemies, which might be of
‘ mischievous consequence to the nation. That
‘ these papers contain some secrets, which our
‘ ministers do not desire to have discovered, is
‘ what I am fully convinced of, otherwise this
‘ motion would not be so strenuously opposed:

‘ But that this discovery might be of any mis-
‘ chievous consequence to the nation, is what I
‘ very much doubt of. It is what every gentle-
‘ man, as a member of this house, ought to
‘ doubt of, because in the present case, we
‘ ought certainly to have all the information
‘ that can be given consistently with the publick
‘ safety; and in a case where we ought to doubt,
‘ it is below the dignity of this assembly to take
‘ a resolution of that doubt from any of our
‘ own members. In such a case, it is from his
‘ Majesty alone we can accept of any satisfac-
‘ tion, and the only method of obtaining that
‘ satisfaction is, by agreeing to the address pro-
‘ posed. Can our presenting such an address be
‘ attended with any bad consequence? If his
‘ Majesty, by way of answer, should tell us,
‘ that some of those papers could not safely be
‘ laid before us, would such an answer be at-
‘ tended with any bad consequence? Could it be
‘ said to be a refusal of our request? No, Sir,
‘ every such request implies, in its own nature,
‘ the condition of its being consistent with the
‘ publick safety; and therefore his Majesty’s tell-
‘ ing us that it is not, will always be look’d on
‘ by a dutiful house of Commons, as a sufficient
‘ answer to such a request; but it is an answer
‘ we can take from none but our Sovereign: It
‘ is beneath our dignity to take such an answer
‘ from any of his servants.

‘ Supposing then there were a probability,
‘ that some of these papers might make a dis-
‘ covery, which would be of dangerous conse-
‘ quence to the nation, it would be no argument
‘ against our agreeing to the motion. But so
‘ far otherwise, it is not possible to suppose,
‘ that any of the papers now called for contain
‘ any secrets, the discovery of which might be
‘ of bad consequence to the nation, without
‘ supposing

‘ supposing our ministers to have been guilty of
‘ a very great weakness. I shall grant, that in
‘ summer, 1738, we were, or at least our mini-
‘ sters were, in a state of uncertainty about war
‘ or peace. I shall grant, it was right in them
‘ to contrive and form schemes for attacking the
‘ *Spaniards*, in case they had refused to treat
‘ with us upon a reasonable footing; but whilst
‘ they were in this doubt, I am sure it would
‘ have been very weak, and very wrong, in
‘ them, to have communicated such schemes,
‘ either to the commanders of our squadrons,
‘ or to the governors of our plantations. For as
‘ no such scheme could be carried into execution
‘ by them, till they had an account from hence,
‘ that our pacifick negotiations were entirely
‘ broke off, and war resolved on, and as the
‘ same express that carried them this account,
‘ might likewise have carried them the schemes
‘ our ministers had formed, with proper instruc-
‘ tions for putting them in execution, it would
‘ have been most imprudent and rash in our mi-
‘ nisters, to give or send them any warlike
‘ schemes, or instructions for executing any such
‘ scheme, before they sent them an account of
‘ our negotiations being entirely broke off. We
‘ cannot, therefore, suppose, that any of the
‘ letters or instructions now called for contain
‘ any secrets, or any schemes which are now to
‘ be executed, unless we suppose that our mini-
‘ sters were guilty of a piece of great weakness;
‘ and if we suppose them guilty of such a piece
‘ of weakness, it is a good reason, not only for
‘ enquiring into their conduct, but for removing
‘ them from our publick councils; for in the
‘ dangerous, and, I am afraid, long journey we
‘ are now entered upon, it is not likely, those
‘ ministers can carry us through with safety,
‘ that made such a trip at the first outset.

‘ Sir, if the letters and instructions now called
‘ for, were such as they ought to have been,
‘ they could contain nothing but orders and di-
‘ rections how to take care of our trade, and
‘ prevent our merchants being farther plundered,
‘ whilst we were negotiating with those that had
‘ plundered them. It was certainly our business
‘ to prevent, as much as possible, our merchants
‘ being plundered during the course of our nego-
‘ tiation, not only for the sake of our trade,
‘ but for the sake of succeeding in our negotia-
‘ tion; for the less we suffered, the less repara-
‘ tion we had to demand, and the less we had to
‘ demand, the more easily might we expect to
‘ obtain satisfaction in an amicable way. It was,
‘ therefore, the duty of those whose business it
‘ was, to send the most prudent and exact in-
‘ structions to our commanders, governors, and
‘ consuls, to take all proper care of our trade in
‘ the mean time; and here, I believe, the secret
‘ lies. Considering how many of our merchant
‘ ships were seized, how many plundered, and
‘ some perhaps, with their whole crew, sunk,
‘ after being stripped of every thing the pirates
‘ thought valuable, there is the greatest reason
‘ to suspect, that due care was not taken of our
‘ trade, nor proper instructions given for that
‘ purpose; and this is the secret, I believe,
‘ which some amongst us are so much afraid of
‘ having discovered; but will the discovery of
‘ this secret be attended with any mischievous
‘ consequence to the nation? Can the enemy
‘ from thence get any advantage? On the con-
‘ trary, Sir, if this secret be not now disco-
‘ vered; if those who neglected, or did not
‘ know how to take care of our trade in time of
‘ peace, be left to take care of it in time of
‘ war, this nation must suffer many losses in
‘ trade, and the enemy must reap many advan-
‘ tages,

‘ tages, which neither we should have suffered,
‘ nor they have reaped, if proper care had been
‘ taken to prevent it. This is a consequence,
‘ and a fatal consequence, which reason may
‘ convince us of, and it is, in my opinion, con-
‘ firmed by what has already passed since the
‘ war began; for if the enemy, in every four
‘ months, during the continuance of the war,
‘ should be able to take as many of our mer-
‘ chant ships, as they have done in the four
‘ months since it began, I am afraid, we shall
‘ neither get honour nor advantage by the war,
‘ and in the mean time our trade will be utterly
‘ undone.

‘ As for the handle the enemy may get from
‘ these papers, for throwing the blame of the
‘ war upon this nation, it is impossible to sup-
‘ pose they can get such a handle from these, or
‘ from any papers that can be laid before Parlia-
‘ ment. The cause of the war is now so well
‘ known, that it is needless either for them or
‘ us to dissemble or disguise it any longer. The
‘ non-payment of the 95,000*l.* stipulated by the
‘ convention, was not the cause of the war; but
‘ the unavoidableness of a war, without giving
‘ up the point of search, was the cause of that
‘ non-payment. It is known to all *Europe*, as
‘ well as to every man in this nation, that the
‘ two principal points in dispute between *Spain*
‘ and us, were reparation for past sufferings, and
‘ no search in time to come. The *Spaniards*, I
‘ believe, were from the beginning resolved to
‘ grant us neither the one nor the other, but
‘ were willing to negotiate with us as long as we
‘ pleased, because, in the mean time, they had
‘ an opportunity to enrich themselves by the
‘ plunder of our merchants; and tho’ a suspen-
‘ sion at least of searching till the point of right
‘ should be determined, ought to have been a

‘ preliminary to any negotiation, yet we not
‘ only entered upon a negotiation, but have
‘ concluded two treaties with them, without sti-
‘ pulating so much as a suspension of searching
‘ our ships upon the open seas. In this manner
‘ we continued to negotiate with them for al-
‘ most twenty years, and would, I believe, have
‘ still continued to do so, if the spirit of the na-
‘ tion had not at last risen up against this tedi-
‘ ous, hopeless, and unequal method of nego-
‘ tiation; for the late convention gave us no-
‘ thing but a new fund for negotiation. It gave
‘ us no security, it gave us no satisfaction, it
‘ gave us no reparation, but what the *Spaniards*
‘ themselves had before acknowledged to be
‘ justly due to us. Before this convention was
‘ concluded, the King of *Spain* himself had al-
‘ lowed six of our ships to have been unjustly
‘ seized: These six ships, I suppose, he reck-
‘ oned worth 27,000*l.* and this was all the repa-
‘ ration he would agree to give. If we would
‘ accept of this reparation, release all other de-
‘ mands, and leave the point of search, as well
‘ as all other disputes, to a new negotiation, the
‘ *Spaniards* were willing to conclude a treaty or
‘ convention with us; and so fond were we of
‘ having a treaty of some sort or other, that we
‘ agreed to these terms. But tho’ this treaty
‘ was not censured, as, in my opinion, it ought
‘ to have been, within doors, yet it was so
‘ much censured, and so loudly and generally
‘ exclaimed against without doors, that our mi-
‘ nisters saw, the nation would neither give up,
‘ nor bear to negotiate any longer about the
‘ point of search, nor would it bear with seeing
‘ the *South-Sea* company made a sacrifice of to
‘ the unjust resentment of the court of *Spain*.

‘ This the court of *Spain* were sensible of, as
‘ well as our ministers; and as the court of *Spain*
‘ were

‘ were resolved not to yield to us in either of
‘ these points, they saw, that a war was unavoid-
‘ able, even though they had paid the 95,000*l.*
‘ stipulated by the convention. Therefore, as I
‘ have said, it was not the non-payment of that
‘ sum that was the cause of the war, but it was
‘ the unavoidableness of a war that was the cause
‘ of that non-payment; and it was the court of
‘ *Spain*’s obstinately insisting upon these two
‘ points, which of their side were most unjust,
‘ that was the cause of a war’s becoming un-
‘ avoidable. This every man of sense, both a-
‘ broad and at home, is fully apprized of. It is
‘ the unjust obstinacy of the court of *Spain*, that
‘ must, by every one, be looked on as the cause
‘ of the war; but whether that obstinacy was
‘ occasioned by the conduct of our ministers, is
‘ a question of a different nature, and a question
‘ that will, I hope, be soon examined into, in
‘ the only place where such a question can be
‘ properly examined, I mean, a free, an inde-
‘ pendent, and an unbiassed *British* Parliament.

‘ Considering the power of the two nations;
‘ considering the incapacity of *Spain*, either to
‘ hurt this nation, or to defend itself against us;
‘ and considering how severely it has, in former
‘ reigns, felt the weight of our resentment, it
‘ must be allowed, Sir, that the obstinacy
‘ of the court of *Spain*, in points that are
‘ so manifestly unjust, is both surprizing and
‘ unaccountable. It must be allowed to be a
‘ sufficient cause for suspecting the conduct of
‘ our negotiators, and as suspicion is a good
‘ cause for a parliamentary enquiry, for this rea-
‘ son, if there were none other, their conduct
‘ ought to be strictly enquired into, and all pa-
‘ pers necessary for that purpose ought to be laid
‘ before us. But according to the honourable
‘ gentleman’s way of arguing, it will always be

‘ either too early or too late, to call for any pa-
‘ pers that may give light into the conduct of a
‘ minister. Whilst he is alive, and intrusted by
‘ the crown, it will always be too early for this
‘ house to call for any papers relating to his con-
‘ duct, because you may, thereby, discover the
‘ secrets of the government: In time of peace
‘ you may, thereby, disturb, or render fruitless,
‘ his negotiations for preventing a war; and in
‘ time of war, you may thereby discover his
‘ schemes for carrying it on. Thus, whilst he is
‘ alive, and favoured by the crown, it will al-
‘ ways be too early to call for any papers relating
‘ to his conduct; and after he is dead, I am
‘ sure, it will be too late to enquire into his con-
‘ duct. At this rate, Sir, you must never en-
‘ quire into the conduct of any minister, whilst
‘ he continues in favour with the crown; and if
‘ this should be laid down as a maxim, it would
‘ destroy the chief use of Parliaments. The na-
‘ tion would have no legal way left of getting
‘ rid of a weak or wicked minister; and if this
‘ should ever come to be our case, it would be
‘ ridiculous in us to boast of the happiness of
‘ our constitution, or to say, we are a free
‘ people.

‘ For this reason, Sir, I hope the arguments
‘ which the honourable gentleman has been
‘ pleased to make use of, will have no weight,
‘ either in this case, or any other of the like
‘ nature. But in this case, there is not the least
‘ room for making use of such an argument;
‘ because it is impossible to suppose, the papers
‘ now called for contain any secrets that ought
‘ not to be discovered, without supposing our
‘ ministers to have been guilty of great weak-
‘ ness, and this, I hope, the honourable gentle-
‘ man is far from supposing, or desiring others
‘ to suppose.’

Robert

Robert Tracy, Esq; spoke next, to the effect as follows, viz.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, The very argument the honourable gentlemen have made use of in favour of this motion, is with me an argument for being against it. They say, it is necessary to make a solemn parliamentary enquiry into the late conduct of our publick affairs, and therefore, it is necessary to have these papers laid before us. Now, I think, it is not in the least necessary to make any enquiry into the late conduct of our publick affairs, and therefore, I think, there is no necessity for our having these papers, or any other papers of the like nature laid before us. I entertain no suspicions, that there was either weakness, or wickedness in any of our late measures: I think they were all as prudent and as right as could be expected from human wisdom; and I have this comfort, that my opinion has always been, and, I hope, still is, the opinion of Parliament. I do not remember, that any one publick measure has lately been taken, but what has had the previous consent, or the posterior approbation of Parliament; and therefore, I can see no reason why we should interrupt our ministers in the prosecution of the just and necessary war we are now engaged in, by putting them upon their trial before this assembly.

*Mr. Tracy's
speech.*

‘ I can find no fault, Sir, with any part of the conduct of those who are now our ministers, but I am really surprized at the conduct of those that oppose them, and who are now the advocates for this motion. They seem in their conduct, or at least, in some part of it, to imitate a man whom, I am certain, they do
‘ not

‘ not like. The King of *Spain*, Sir, seems to
 ‘ have laid it down as a maxim, that he may
 ‘ abdicate the crown, and take it up again,
 ‘ whenever he thinks fit. He has already done
 ‘ so once; but if he abdicates a second time, I
 ‘ hope they won’t again give him leave to re-
 ‘ sume. I hope he will be served as a neigh-
 ‘ bouring monarch was, who, it is thought, had
 ‘ likewise a design of re-ascending the throne,
 ‘ but was prevented by being locked up in a
 ‘ castle. The gentlemen in the opposition, like
 ‘ the King of *Spain*, have once already retired
 ‘ from their seats in this house, and like him
 ‘ too, have again resumed them: If they do so
 ‘ a second time, I think they ought to be taken
 ‘ at their word, and prevented from having it
 ‘ in their power to return. The King of *Spain*,
 ‘ and his Queen together, ever since he resumed
 ‘ the crown, have been raising continual broils
 ‘ and disturbances in *Europe*: In this too these
 ‘ gentlemen seem to imitate him: They seem, I
 ‘ think, to come here only with a design to raise
 ‘ disturbances, and to impede and retard the
 ‘ publick measures, at a time when every engine
 ‘ of government ought to be left to act with
 ‘ the utmost vigour and freedom. Even this
 ‘ motion I must look on as a prosecution of the
 ‘ same design, and therefore, I shall be against
 ‘ our agreeing to it.’

Mr. Alderman *Heathcote* stood up next, and spoke in substance thus.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Alderman
Heathcote's speech.

‘ Sir, Whatever the honourable gentleman
 ‘ that spoke last may think, whatever the ma-
 ‘ jority of this house may think of our late pub-
 ‘ lick measures, I am very sure the majority of
 ‘ the nation do not approve of them. The ma-
 ‘ jority

‘ jority of the nation not only disapproved of
‘ the pacifick, negotiating humour that for so
‘ many years prevailed amongst us ; but they
‘ did, they do still suspect, that our negotiators
‘ were either most egregiously imposed on by
‘ the court of *Spain*, or induced, from some pri-
‘ vate motives of their own, to continue nego-
‘ tiating, and suffering our merchants to be plun-
‘ dered, after their being fully assured that their
‘ negotiations could have no success. If the
‘ former was their case, they were guilty of a
‘ most pernicious weakness ; if the latter, of a
‘ most heinous wickedness. This is the way of
‘ thinking with almost every man without doors,
‘ nay, it is the way of talking with almost every
‘ man without doors, that is not paid for talk-
‘ ing otherwise ; and, indeed, the very nature
‘ of the case must, in my opinion, make every
‘ man think so, whatever way he may talk. It
‘ is now almost twenty years since the *Spaniards*
‘ set up their pretence to a right of searching
‘ our ships in the *American* seas, and seizing and
‘ confiscating such as had what they were pleased
‘ to call contraband goods on board. It is almost
‘ twenty years since they began to exercise this
‘ right, and they have continued to exercise it
‘ without interruption, and with great success,
‘ except when they suspended it, that they might
‘ afterwards reassume the exercise of it with the
‘ more safety.

‘ If they had only set up such a right, Sir,
‘ without making use of it, or if the use they
‘ made of it had done no immediate prejudice
‘ to this nation, we might have negotiated with
‘ them about it for some years, we might have
‘ delayed insisting peremptorily upon their giv-
‘ ing it up in express terms ; but, as they not
‘ only set it up, but made use of it, and as the
‘ use they made of it was infinitely prejudicial,
‘ as

certed such hostile schemes, and suppose they were so weak, as to communicate those schemes to our sea-commanders, our governors, or our consuls, and to have sent instructions for carrying them into execution, before they knew whether they were to be executed or no; for though they may be wise, I do not take them to be conjurers, and, therefore, I cannot suppose, they knew what resolutions the court of *Spain* would come to, upon our making a peremptory demand. I say, suppose all that in this case can be supposed, is it, now that war is declared, in the power of *Spain* to prevent the execution of such schemes, or to take any measures for rendering the execution more difficult? Suppose we had concerted a scheme for making an attack upon the *Havanna*, upon *Cartagena*, *Vera Cruz*, or any of the other *Spanish* settlements in *America*, could the *Spaniards* now send a reinforcement of troops to any of those places, if we take proper measures to prevent it? Whilst we are masters at sea, it is evident they cannot; therefore, a discovery of such schemes can do no prejudice, but may be of service to the nation, because it may frighten the court of *Spain* into a compliance with our just demands, which is the only way they have, or can take for preventing the execution of them.

The obstinacy of the court of *Spain*, during the course of our negotiations, I am convinced, Sir, proceeded entirely from the ignorance or the timidity of our negotiators, which gave that court reason to think, either that we did not understand our own rights, or that we were afraid of endeavouring to vindicate them by force of arms; and now that war is declared, I am convinced, that their obstinacy in continuing the war, rather than submit to reasonable

‘ sonable terms, can proceed from nothing but a
‘ belief, that we either do not know how to pro-
‘ secute the war, or that we dare not pro-
‘ secute it in the proper way, for fear of dis-
‘ obliging their friends the *French*. If from a
‘ discovery of our schemes, it should appear,
‘ that we both know how to prosecute the war,
‘ and dare prosecute it in the proper way, which,
‘ I hope, will appear, whenever our schemes
‘ are discovered, I am persuaded, it would put
‘ an end to the obstinacy of the *Spaniards*, and,
‘ consequently, to the present war, which must
‘ be allowed to be inconvenient for us, but it
‘ may, probably, be fatal to them. Therefore,
‘ there can be no danger in our having the pa-
‘ pers now called for laid before us: Without
‘ them, or, at least, most of them, we can have
‘ no satisfaction as to our past conduct; and
‘ whatever we may think about it, we ought to
‘ have some regard to what our constituents
‘ think of it: Many of them have suffered by
‘ the tediousness of our negotiations: Most of
‘ them complained of our continuing so long to
‘ negotiate, under the insults and depredations
‘ we were thereby exposed to; and as our nego-
‘ tiations now appear to have been fruitless, those
‘ that are to suffer by the war, have reason to
‘ ask, why they were made to suffer so much by
‘ the peace? In this they expect satisfaction from
‘ Parliament, and if they should be disappoint-
‘ ed, they will, I fear, have the same opinion of
‘ us, that most of them, I believe, have of our
‘ late negotiators: They will think, we have a
‘ greater regard to our own ease and tranquillity,
‘ than we have to the honour of the nation, or
‘ the happiness of the people; which is a cha-
‘ racter I shall always endeavour to avoid, and,
‘ therefore, I must be for agreeing to the motion
‘ now under our consideration.’

The

The next that spoke was Sir *John Barnard*, the purport of whose speech was as follows, viz.

Mr. Speaker,

Sir, I have always attended my duty in this house, and always shall, as long as the people freely and voluntarily do me the honour of chusing me one of their representatives; but if we are never to enquire into the conduct of any minister, till that minister, or the crown, gives us leave to do so, our attending here, or our meeting together in this house, will be of very little signification to the people; for, I may venture to prophesy, that if ever we should have a house of Commons so complaisant to the crown, as not to enquire into the conduct of any of its ministers, without a *congé* for that purpose, such a house of Commons will be as complaisant in every other respect; and will consequently agree to every law the crown may be pleased to propose, and to every grant the crown may be pleased to demand, and insist on. Like some of the petty states in *France* or *Germany*, we may make humble remonstrances to our Sovereign, and represent our inability to comply with the free-gift demanded of us; but when our Sovereign, or his prime minister, says, it must be done, we may depend on it, that such a house of Commons will always submit and agree to what is demanded of them. The gentlemen of the other side of the question, should be cautious of mentioning any thing that has been lately done in *Spain*, for there are many things now done in that kingdom, which neither would nor could be done, if their *Cortez* had preserved their ancient freedom and independency; and, if the maxims these gentlemen have
‘ been

Sir John
Barnard's
speech.

‘ been pleased to advance upon this occasion,
 ‘ should ever be received in this kingdom, our
 ‘ Parliaments will soon become as complaisant to
 ‘ the crown, and of as little use to the people,
 ‘ as the *Cortez* now are in *Spain*.

‘ A parliamentary enquiry into a minister’s
 ‘ conduct is, I find, very much mistaken by the
 ‘ gentlemen who oppose this question. Sir, it is
 ‘ not a trial: It may, I grant, be the cause of a
 ‘ trial, but it is itself no trial: It is a sort of
 ‘ debt which every minister owes to the publick.
 ‘ A minister is a sort of agent or steward for the
 ‘ publick, and is not every steward obliged to
 ‘ give an account of his stewardship? When a
 ‘ lord happens, upon a general view of his af-
 ‘ fairs, to be perfectly satisfied with the manage-
 ‘ ment of his steward, he may save himself the
 ‘ trouble of examining, or appointing others to
 ‘ examine particularly into his steward’s conduct
 ‘ and accounts; and, in the same manner, when
 ‘ a nation happens, upon the general view of
 ‘ publick affairs, to be perfectly well satisfied
 ‘ with the conduct of its ministers, there is no
 ‘ necessity for a particular enquiry into their con-
 ‘ duct; but, will any gentleman say, this is our
 ‘ case at present? Sir, our conduct, as members
 ‘ of this house, is not, in this case, to be di-
 ‘ rected by our own opinion. This house is not
 ‘ the lord to whom our ministers are to answer
 ‘ for their conduct: The people is the lord to
 ‘ whom they are to answer, and we are appoint-
 ‘ ed by the people to examine into their conduct
 ‘ and accounts. Therefore, when the people in
 ‘ general, or a great part of them, seem dissa-
 ‘ tisfied with the conduct of publick affairs, it is
 ‘ our duty, whatever we ourselves may think,
 ‘ to make a strict and impartial enquiry into the
 ‘ conduct of our ministers, and to call for all
 ‘ papers that may be necessary for that purpose.
 ‘ This

‘ This is not subjecting our ministers to a trial,
‘ it is only making them give an account to the
‘ people, of their stewardship, which is an obli-
‘ gation they lay themselves under, when they
‘ accept of being the ministers of the crown,
‘ and consequently the stewards of the people;
‘ and they ought to be ready to perform this
‘ obligation, when, and as often as the people
‘ may please to require it. I am sorry it is not
‘ performed much oftener than has been usual of
‘ late years: I am sure, the oftener it is per-
‘ formed, the more it will redound to the ho-
‘ nour of a good administration, the better safe-
‘ guard it will be to the people against the frauds
‘ and oppressions of a bad one.

‘ In private life, Sir, we know that a good
‘ and faithful steward is desirous of having his
‘ management and accounts examined and set-
‘ tled as often as possible: No man that has ho-
‘ nest intentions desires to have long, or will
‘ have perplexed accounts; and therefore, an
‘ examination of them can give him no con-
‘ cern, nor can it give him much trouble, or
‘ take up any considerable part of his time. In
‘ publick life, I am convinced it will always be
‘ the same: When there is no fraud nor mystery
‘ in a minister’s conduct, he will be desirous
‘ of having it often enquired into: Such exami-
‘ nation can give him no trouble, nor take up
‘ any part of his time; because his papers, his
‘ vouchers, his measures may be easily under-
‘ stood, and will justify themselves. Therefore,
‘ when I find ministers cutting and shuffling, and
‘ making use of all their art to prevent an exa-
‘ mination into their conduct, it will always be,
‘ with me, a strong argument for an immediate
‘ and strict enquiry. But now, it seems, we
‘ must not enter upon an enquiry, because it will
‘ take off the thoughts of our ministers from the

‘ prosecution of the just and necessary war we
 ‘ are at present engaged in. Sir, I am surprized
 ‘ to hear this argument made use of; for, it is
 ‘ very well known, that none of our generals or
 ‘ admirals have had any chief concern in our ad-
 ‘ ministration for these several years, nor has
 ‘ any one of them ever once been employed in
 ‘ our negotiations; therefore their thoughts can
 ‘ be no way taken up by an enquiry into our
 ‘ late conduct, and I must think, that in time
 ‘ of war, our generals and admirals ought to be
 ‘ his Majesty’s chief counsellors. I wish they
 ‘ had been so for some years past: If they had,
 ‘ we should not, I believe, have suffered so much
 ‘ by our negotiations. If the advice of some of
 ‘ them had been followed, I am convinced, the
 ‘ war would have been begun and happily ended
 ‘ long before this time; and, for this reason, I
 ‘ do not know, but an enquiry into our past
 ‘ conduct may be one of the best things we can
 ‘ do for the publick good, because it will take
 ‘ up the time of our negotiators, and prevent
 ‘ their interrupting our generals and admirals in
 ‘ the prosecution of the war.

‘ It is not possible, Sir, for our ministers, with
 ‘ all their art, to shew, that an enquiry into
 ‘ their pacifick conduct can be attended with any
 ‘ one disadvantage to the nation; and, if any
 ‘ great part of the people appear dissatisfied with
 ‘ their conduct, I have shewn, that it is our du-
 ‘ ty to enquire into it. Will any gentleman
 ‘ say, that no great part of the people appear
 ‘ dissatisfied with our long and tedious negotia-
 ‘ tions? While these pacifick measures were
 ‘ carrying on, the people appeared dissatisfied
 ‘ with them, and openly shewed their dissatis-
 ‘ faction by many petitions presented to this
 ‘ house. Is it possible to suppose, they are now
 ‘ less dissatisfied than they were at that time? If
 ‘ our

‘ our pacifick measures had ended in an honoura-
‘ ble and solid treaty of peace, they might at
‘ last have given some satisfaction: The people
‘ would have forgot and forgiven the insults and
‘ losses the nation was exposed to, by the me-
‘ thods that were taken for obtaining so good an
‘ end. But our negotiations ended in a most in-
‘ significant convention, which was called the
‘ preliminaries to a definitive treaty of peace,
‘ but it has since appeared to be the prelimina-
‘ ries to a dangerous war. In these circumstan-
‘ ces, is it not natural for the people to enquire,
‘ what hopes, what foundation we had for conti-
‘ nuing a pacifick negotiation for so many years,
‘ under all the disadvantages of a real war? Is it
‘ not natural for the people to enquire, how we
‘ came to allow the *Spaniards* quietly, on our
‘ part at least, to wrest from our ancient al-
‘ ly the Emperor, the rich and beautiful king-
‘ dom of the *Two Sicilies*? Is it not natural for
‘ the people to enquire, how we came to put
‘ ourselves to the expence of sending a large
‘ squadron to conduct Don *Carlos* triumphantly
‘ to the possession of that kingdom? And all
‘ this, without their giving us the least satisfac-
‘ tion as to any one point then in dispute be-
‘ tween them and us. Sir, the people will en-
‘ quire into these things, and if you do not give
‘ them satisfaction by a previous parliamentary
‘ enquiry, they will condemn as well as enquire:
‘ They will go farther, they will condemn you,
‘ as to your characters at least, for not having
‘ condemned such a weak and pernicious con-
‘ duct.

‘ The honourable gentleman, Sir, that spoke
‘ first against this motion, mistook the case very
‘ much when he said, the convention was ap-
‘ proved of by Parliament. If such a question
‘ had been put, it would not have passed. If

‘ the question had been put in exprefs terms, Ap-
 ‘ prove or difapprove of that treaty, it would,
 ‘ I am perfuaded, have been difapproved of,
 ‘ even by this houfe: It was difapproved of by
 ‘ the whole nation. I am furprized to hear it
 ‘ now faid, that we got by that treaty any repa-
 ‘ ration for paff injuries, or any fecurity againft
 ‘ future. If the *Spaniards* had paid us the 95,000*l.*
 ‘ thereby ftipulated, we, or at leaft our *South-Sea*
 ‘ company, muft have paid them back 68,000*l.*
 ‘ of that fum, or have loft their right to the *Af-*
 ‘ *siento* contract; fo that all the reparation pro-
 ‘ mifed was only 27,000*l.* which was not near
 ‘ equal to the value of the fix fhips the *Spaniards*
 ‘ had before acknowledged to have been unjuftly
 ‘ feized. Thus it is evident, that no fatisfaction
 ‘ or reparation was fo much as ftipulated for the
 ‘ injured honour of the nation, and a very in-
 ‘ fignificant one for the loffes of our merchants.
 ‘ Then, as to the point of fearch, no fecurity a-
 ‘ gainft it was fo much as ftipulated: It was ex-
 ‘ preffly referred to be regulated by plenipotentia-
 ‘ ries; that is to fay, it was on our part tacitly
 ‘ given up. We got nothing therefore by that
 ‘ convention, but a new fund for negotiation, as
 ‘ an honourable gentleman has already faid in
 ‘ this debate; and this our minifters would,
 ‘ I believe, have remained fatisfied with, for
 ‘ fome years longer, if the fpirit of the nation
 ‘ would have given them leave; but they faw
 ‘ they durft not continue to negotiate any longer
 ‘ upon the former footing, and *Spain* would treat
 ‘ with them upon no other.

‘ This, Sir, was the true fource of the war. *Spain*
 ‘ did not refuse to perform her part of that con-
 ‘ vention, becaufe fhe thought it good for us,
 ‘ but becaufe fhe faw that her making the ftipu-
 ‘ lated payment would not prevent a war, unlefs
 ‘ fhe likewise did us juftice with refpect to the
 ‘ other

‘ other points in dispute. This she resolved not
 ‘ to do, and therefore she resolved, not to put
 ‘ 95,000*l.* into the hands of a people from
 ‘ whom she expected an immediate attack. This,
 ‘ Sir, was the true reason why *Spain* did not pay
 ‘ us the 95,000*l.* at the time appointed; but,
 ‘ when I am thus considering the reason why
 ‘ *Spain* did not make that stipulated payment, I
 ‘ cannot but observe, that in all her manifesto’s,
 ‘ she attributes that non-payment to agreements
 ‘ which the Parliament never heard of; and this
 ‘ furnishes us with a new, and a very strong ar-
 ‘ gument for enquiring into our negotiations,
 ‘ previous to that convention, in order to see
 ‘ whether the court of *Spain* have any just
 ‘ ground for alledging and insisting upon such
 ‘ agreements; for if they have, we ought at
 ‘ least to censure those that made such agree-
 ‘ ments, before we punish *Spain* for insisting up-
 ‘ on them.

‘ Thus, Sir, in every light the question can
 ‘ be put, it appears necessary for us to enquire
 ‘ into our late pacifick conduct. In no light can
 ‘ it be supposed, that such an enquiry will be
 ‘ attended with any danger or disadvantage to
 ‘ the nation; and, as the papers now called for
 ‘ are necessary for our information, upon such
 ‘ an enquiry, therefore, I hope, the motion will
 ‘ be agreed to.’

The last that spoke in this debate was Sir *Robert Walpole*, whose speech was to this effect, *viz.*

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, I had not the good fortune of being
 ‘ here upon the first motion, but I have been
 ‘ informed of it, and of the fate it met with. I
 ‘ think the house was much in the right in put-
 ‘ ting a negative upon it, and, I hope, you will

Sir Robert
Walpole's
speech.

do the same with regard to the motion now before you. The question is not about the right this house has to enquire into any publick measure, or into the conduct of any publick minister. I hope, I shall never see this right disputed hereafter, though it has been in former times warmly contested, and positively denied. But these times, thank God! are over: Our happy constitution is now so well understood, and the rights of this house so firmly established, that no man, I believe, for the future, will ever deny our right to enquire. But there may be such a thing as an improper or imprudent enquiry; and the question now before us is, whether it would not be improper to enter upon any such enquiry at this time, and whether it would not be imprudent to make a publick enquiry into the conduct of our negotiations with *Spain*.

For my own part, Sir, I should be extreamly glad to have those negotiations enquired into in the most strict, the most impartial, and the most publick manner, if no damage could from thence ensue to the nation. This, I say, I should be extreamly glad of, because I am convinced, it would redound very much to the honour of his Majesty, and of every one employed by him in carrying on those negotiations. On his Majesty's part nothing would appear but the utmost candour, the utmost regard for the rights of his people, and the most tender concern for their tranquillity, safety, and happiness: Whereas, on the part of *Spain*, there would appear nothing but quibble, chicanery, and the most disingenuous manner of treating: Seeming to grant one day what they denied the next; and continual repeated promises, that all should be made easy in a little time. It is to this that we are chiefly to ascribe
the

‘ the tediousness of our negotiations. His Ma-
‘ jesty, from his concern for the peace and wel-
‘ fare of his people, was unwilling to come to a
‘ rupture with *Spain*, as long as there were any
‘ hopes left of being able to accommodate all
‘ our disputes with that nation in an amicable
‘ manner; and these hopes were kept alive by
‘ the repeated assurances given, from time to
‘ time, by the court of *Spain*, and the plausible
‘ excuses they were furnished with, from the
‘ great distance of the places where proper en-
‘ quiries were to be made, and from the imper-
‘ fect accounts sent them by their governors in
‘ *America*.

‘ These assurances and excuses, I say, Sir,
‘ prolonged our negotiations, and prevented his
‘ Majesty’s resolving to have recourse to arms,
‘ till he saw there was no depending upon any
‘ promises they could make, or upon the most
‘ solemn treaty that could be concluded with
‘ them; and therefore, I am convinced, a par-
‘ liamentary enquiry into these negotiations,
‘ would redound very much to the honour of
‘ every gentleman that was concerned either in
‘ advising or carrying them on. But, I must
‘ beg leave to think, that they are not a fit
‘ subject for a parliamentary enquiry, nor is the
‘ present a proper time for the Parliament’s en-
‘ tering upon a disquisition into any publick
‘ measure. In all cases of a foreign nature, we
‘ ought to be extremely cautious of resolving to
‘ enquire into them, in a parliamentary way;
‘ because, no such enquiry can be carried on,
‘ without running a great risk of discovering se-
‘ crets that may give foreign courts a great ad-
‘ vantage over us, and such, perhaps, as may
‘ render every court in *Europe* not a little shy of
‘ entering into any future negotiation with us.
‘ When we have a minister at a foreign court, it

‘ is often necessary for him, in his letters, to
 ‘ give an account of the personal characters, the
 ‘ particular interests, and the private conversa-
 ‘ tions of the ministers and favourites of the
 ‘ court at which he resides ; and, I must beg of
 ‘ gentlemen to consider, whether foreigners would
 ‘ think it either decent or honourable in us, to
 ‘ expose such letters to publick view, and whe-
 ‘ ther it would not make every court in *Europe*
 ‘ extreamly shy of entering into any future ne-
 ‘ gotiation with the court of *Great Britain*.

‘ I could mention many other circumstances,
 ‘ Sir, which must always make it inconvenient
 ‘ and hazardous, to set up a parliamentary en-
 ‘ quiry into any foreign measure ; but what I
 ‘ have said will, I hope, be sufficient for convin-
 ‘ cing you, that no such enquiry ought to be set
 ‘ up, unless the measure appears to have been
 ‘ monstrously absurd, and that, by such an en-
 ‘ quiry, some methods may be found for repair-
 ‘ ing the damage the nation may have suffered,
 ‘ or preventing the danger the nation may have
 ‘ been led into by that foreign measure. Let us
 ‘ now examine, if either of these be the case,
 ‘ with regard to, our late pacifick conduct, as
 ‘ gentlemen are pleased to call it. Surely, it
 ‘ cannot be called monstrously absurd, because it
 ‘ is but two years ago, that this very house of
 ‘ Commons advised his Majesty to continue his
 ‘ negotiations, and *to use his endeavours with his*
 ‘ *Catholick Majesty, to obtain effectual relief for his*
 ‘ *injured subjects.* According to this advice, his
 ‘ Majesty renewed his endeavours to obtain re-
 ‘ dress in an amicable manner, and the court of
 ‘ *Spain* now finding that bare promises or assu-
 ‘ rances would not do, they carried their disin-
 ‘ genuity such a length, that they actually a-
 ‘ greed to, and signed a solemn treaty, within

‘ a year after this advice was given to his Ma-
‘ jesty, by his Parliament.

‘ Whether the convention was a right treaty
‘ or no, is not the question now to be determi-
‘ ned, but, I am sure, this house cannot call it
‘ monstrously absurd; because, though we did
‘ not in exprefs terms approve of it, we so far
‘ approved of it, that we advised his Majesty to
‘ proceed upon it, and upon the footing of that
‘ treaty, our plenipotentiaries immediately in-
‘ sisted upon the crown of *Spain*’s giving up all
‘ pretences to any right of searching our ships in
‘ the *American* seas; so that I cannot see, how
‘ we can now so much as find fault with that
‘ treaty, or with any of the negotiations that ei-
‘ ther preceded or succeeded it. But, upon this
‘ occasion, Sir, I must observe, that some gen-
‘ tlemen are so sanguine, and so much wedded
‘ to their own opinion, that they never think
‘ there can be any thing in what is said against
‘ them; and for this reason, I believe, they ne-
‘ ver examine the arguments or objections of
‘ their opponents with attention. For my part,
‘ I am not so sanguine: There is no opinion of
‘ mine, where I will not admit, that there may
‘ be something in what is said against it. This
‘ is my case, with regard to the convention.
‘ There was, perhaps, something in what was
‘ said against it; but upon the whole, I then
‘ thought, I still think, the argument in its fa-
‘ vour was stronger and better supported, than
‘ the argument against it. By accepting that
‘ treaty, we have rendered *Spain* inexcusable,
‘ whereas, if we had begun hostilities when such
‘ terms were offered us, I am afraid most courts
‘ in *Europe* would have laid the blame of the
‘ war at our door.

‘ Having now shewn, Sir, that our pacifick
‘ conduct, or our negotiations, tedious as they
‘ were,

' were, cannot, by this house, be called mon-
 ' strouſly abſurd, I ſhall next examine, whether
 ' we can, by enquiring into theſe negotiations,
 ' repair any damage the nation has ſuffered, or
 ' obviate any danger it lies expoſed to. If ſuch
 ' an enquiry could any way contribute to our
 ' ſucceſs in the war, or to the bringing about a
 ' ſpeedy and honourable peace, I ſhould be as
 ' much for it as any gentleman in this houſe;
 ' but, in my opinion, it may do us great preju-
 ' dice in both theſe reſpects. It may unfold
 ' ſuch ſecrets, as will make ſome of the powers
 ' of *Europe* our enemies that are now our friends,
 ' or ſuch as may inſtruct the enemy, not only
 ' how to defend themſelves, but how to hurt us;
 ' and though none of our generals may be di-
 ' rectly and perſonally concerned, yet, ſuch a
 ' publick conteſt as ſuch an enquiry muſt neceſ-
 ' ſarily occaſion, will take off the attention of
 ' the whole nation from the proſecution of the
 ' war, and may raiſe ſuch heats and animoſities
 ' amongſt ourſelves, as will be a great hindrance
 ' to us, and a great advantage to the enemy;
 ' which fatal effect we ſhall have the more reaſon
 ' to dread, when we reflect, that there was ne-
 ' ver yet a parliamentary enquiry, which did
 ' not produce one party that thought they had
 ' diſcovered great crimes and miſdemeanors, and
 ' another party that thought they had diſcovered
 ' none.

' This, Sir, leads me naturally to conſider the
 ' propriety of the time for making the enquiry
 ' propoſed. Suppoſe our late negotiations with
 ' *Spain* were a proper ſubject for a parliamentary
 ' enquiry, which, I hope, I have ſhewn, they
 ' are not; yet, I cannot think, any gentleman
 ' will ſay, that the very beginning of a heavy
 ' and dangerous war, is a proper time for us to
 ' ſet up ſuch an enquiry into any affair, either
 ' of

‘ of a foreign or domestick nature, especially
‘ when it cannot be said, that there is the least
‘ danger in delaying it, or that we can reap any
‘ benefit or advantage from it, except the satisfac-
‘ tion of punishing those that were concerned
‘ in these negotiations, in case it should appear
‘ that they have injured their country by their
‘ crimes, their neglect, or their imprudence.
‘ Publick justice, I shall grant, must be a satisfac-
‘ tion, to every one who wishes well to the
‘ publick; but a delay is no pardon; and, I
‘ hope this war will not be of such a long conti-
‘ nuance, as to out-live all those who were con-
‘ cerned in the negotiations that preceded it. A
‘ proper and seasonable time will come for en-
‘ quiring into any, or all of our late publick
‘ transactions: I hope it will come before any of
‘ those persons are dead, that were concern-
‘ ed in our late negotiations, and when that
‘ time comes, if an enquiry should appear ne-
‘ cessary, I shall most readily concur in it; and,
‘ if any of our negotiators should appear to have
‘ been guilty, either of weakness or wickedness,
‘ I shall be as ready as any gentleman in this
‘ house, to censure or punish them.

‘ For these reasons, Sir, I think it would be
‘ both improper and imprudent in us, at present,
‘ to make a parliamentary enquiry into any late
‘ publick transaction, either foreign or domest-
‘ tick; and however general the complaints, or
‘ the suspicions may be among the people, a-
‘ gainst our late pacifick conduct with regard to
‘ *Spain*, we ought not, I think, in this house, to
‘ do any thing that is either improper or impru-
‘ dent, for the sake of giving satisfaction to those
‘ that appear dissatisfied. But, I do not believe,
‘ that the dissatisfaction with those measures, is
‘ general among the people without doors, or
‘ that it, in any degree, prevails among the bet-
‘ ter

' ter sort of people in the nation. Those few
 ' amongst us that suffered by the *Spanish* depre-
 ' dations in time of peace, were, I believe, dis-
 ' pleased with our continuing to negotiate after
 ' they had suffered, and I do not at all wonder at
 ' it; for it is natural for men to judge of the
 ' publick interest, from their own private interest
 ' and passions; but it is the duty of those who
 ' are at the helm of publick affairs, to lay aside
 ' all private regards, either of their own, or of
 ' any man else, and to consider the publick in-
 ' terest alone. I wish we could always do so in
 ' this house: If we did, we should judge more
 ' candidly of one another's intentions, as well as
 ' of the intentions of our ministers; for, I am
 ' sure, it is more their interest to consult the
 ' publick good in all their transactions, than it is
 ' the interest of any other set of men in the
 ' kingdom, because not only the interest of their
 ' country, which is common to them with other
 ' subjects, but their personal safety and glory
 ' depends immediately upon their doing so.
 ' Therefore, when we are to direct our conduct
 ' in this house by the opinions of our constitu-
 ' ents, if ever such a case is to be admitted, we
 ' should consider seriously, not only the general
 ' prevalency of such opinions, but whether or
 ' no they are founded upon particular interests,
 ' or popular prejudices; and, if we do this, I
 ' am convinced, we shall find no cause to shew
 ' any regard to the complaints or suspicions
 ' without doors, against our late pacifick con-
 ' duct.

' But now suppose, Sir, that the present were
 ' a proper time for enquiring into the conduct of
 ' our late negotiations, and that we ought in
 ' prudence to do so, yet I cannot think it would
 ' be either proper or necessary for us to call for
 ' the papers now moved for; necessary it cannot
 ' be,

‘ be, Sir, with respect to most of the papers
‘ called for; because the letters and instruc-
‘ tions to our governors, admirals, or consuls,
‘ can have nothing to do with our negotiations;
‘ and if they were necessary, I do not think it
‘ would be proper at this time to call for them.
‘ Upon this subject, Sir, it is hardly possible for
‘ me to speak without running the risk of be-
‘ ing misunderstood, so ready are gentlemen to
‘ mistake suppositions for assertions. However,
‘ as we had one squadron in the *Mediterranean*,
‘ and another in the *West-Indies*, I shall suppose,
‘ that there might have been orders or instruc-
‘ tions sent to Admiral *Haddock* in the *Mediterra-
‘ nean*, or to Commodore *Brown* in the *West-
‘ Indies*, to execute some design against the *Spa-
‘ niards*, in either, or both those places, as soon
‘ as they should hear from our minister at the
‘ court of *Spain*, that the negotiations were
‘ broke off without any effect. This, I say, I
‘ only suppose; I must desire gentlemen to
‘ take notice, I do not assert; but it may be
‘ supposed, because a messenger could go much
‘ sooner from *Spain* to either of these admirals,
‘ than he could come to *London*, and from
‘ thence back again either to the *Mediterranean*
‘ or *West-Indies*. Though the *Spaniards* at that
‘ time prevented the execution of those designs,
‘ by their agreeing to the convention, yet now
‘ that they have broke that very convention,
‘ those designs, if there were any such, or some-
‘ thing like them, are certainly proposed to be
‘ executed; and if so, it would certainly be ve-
‘ ry wrong to have them discovered, by having
‘ the papers now called for laid before us, before
‘ they are, or can be executed. In such cases
‘ I shall grant, that his Majesty is the proper
‘ person from whom this house is to take an an-
‘ swer; but I shall never be for calling for pa-
‘ pers,

‘ pers, when I think it highly probable, that his
 ‘ Majesty cannot order them to be laid before us,
 ‘ without unfolding secrets which ought not to
 ‘ be discovered ; and as I take this to be the case
 ‘ with regard to the papers now called for, I
 ‘ must be against the motion.’

The question upon this motion was carried in the negative without a division.

And as soon as this question was over, *Edmund Waller*, Esq; stood up, and spoke in substance thus :

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Mr. *Waller*'s speech
 and motion
 for papers.

‘ Sir, Notwithstanding the bad success my
 ‘ worthy friend has met with in this motion, yet
 ‘ I will offer another, and I do it with the more
 ‘ assurance, because the motion I propose to
 ‘ make, relates but to one particular point, and
 ‘ cannot discover any of our deep-laid war-like
 ‘ designs, or any secret that can be of dangerous
 ‘ consequence to the publick. It can discover
 ‘ no secret design, unless it be a design to sacri-
 ‘ fice the *South-Sea* company to the success of
 ‘ our negotiations ; and, if there was any such
 ‘ design, I am convinced every gentleman will
 ‘ think, it would be of more dangerous conse-
 ‘ quence to the publick to have it remain con-
 ‘ cealed, than to have it now revealed. But be-
 ‘ fore I make my motion, I must obviate some
 ‘ of the objections that were made by the ho-
 ‘ nourable gentleman who concluded the last de-
 ‘ bate, against enquiries in general. If his ob-
 ‘ jections were to hold good, it would never be
 ‘ prudent in this house to enquire into the con-
 ‘ duct of any foreign affair, for in every such af-
 ‘ fair, there may be secrets in some of the let-
 ‘ ters or papers relating to it, that ought not to
 ‘ be

‘ be published for a century, at least, after its
‘ final conclusion. But in all such cases, we
‘ have a remedy which may be easily, and has
‘ been often applied. When upon our address,
‘ his Majesty answers, that several of the papers
‘ called for, contain secrets which ought not to
‘ be discovered, we may name a secret commit-
‘ tee to inspect such papers, and to report such
‘ parts of them only, as are necessary and fit to
‘ be communicated; and a secret which regards
‘ the publick safety or welfare, may be as safely
‘ entrusted to a select committee of this house,
‘ as to any committee of his Majesty’s privy
‘ council. The danger of a discovery can there-
‘ fore never be a solid objection to our enquiring
‘ into any affair, either of a foreign or domestick
‘ nature; and much less can it be an objection
‘ to our addressing for any papers; because, till
‘ we have his Majesty’s answer, we cannot know,
‘ nor ought we to suppose, they contain secrets
‘ which ought not to be discovered.

‘ I shall always think, Sir, notwithstanding
‘ the fate of the two former motions, that it
‘ would be wrong in this house to refuse calling
‘ for any papers, because some amongst us say,
‘ they think it probable, that such papers con-
‘ tain secrets, which ought not to be discovered.
‘ It was, in my opinion, so far from being high-
‘ ly probable, that I think it was impossible the
‘ instructions to our admirals could contain any
‘ secret schemes or designs; because no such
‘ schemes or designs have been, as yet, executed.
‘ If any designs had been formed, which were
‘ to have been executed with the utmost expedi-
‘ tion, in case our negotiations should have
‘ broke off, surely they ought to have been exe-
‘ cuted with as much expedition, after the con-
‘ vention’s being broke through. It is now six
‘ months since the convention was openly broke
‘ through

‘ through by the *Spaniards*, and as we have, as
‘ yet, heard of the execution of no hostile
‘ schemes, I must believe, there were none such
‘ formed, and much less communicated to our
‘ admirals or governors, till after we found, that
‘ the *Spaniards* would not perform what they had
‘ so expressly agreed to in the convention.

‘ I beg pardon, Sir, for touching upon what is
‘ past, but as it may be of some weight with re-
‘ spect to the motion I am to make, I hope the
‘ house will excuse me. The honourable gen-
‘ tleman asked us, what advantage can we ex-
‘ pect from an immediate enquiry, besides that
‘ of punishing the guilty? which, he says, we
‘ may do afterwards as well as now, if any should
‘ then appear to have been guilty. I will tell
‘ him one advantage, Sir, which we may reap
‘ by an immediate, and cannot reap by a future
‘ enquiry: We shall prevent the guilty from be-
‘ ing farther guilty, as they probably may be, if
‘ their past conduct is not immediately enqui-
‘ red into. This, Sir, is an advantage of the
‘ utmost consequence in our present situation:
‘ The nation may be undone by our not laying
‘ hold of it: If our pacifick measures were car-
‘ ried on by imprudent, pusillanimous, perplex’d
‘ counsels, what will become of the nation, if
‘ our warlike measures be carried on by counsels
‘ of the same sort? Besides, before the war can
‘ be concluded, we must have new negotiations;
‘ and, shall we allow our future negotiations to
‘ be directed and carried on by those who have
‘ been guilty of so much weakness in our past?
‘ This, Sir, will probably be the case, if we do
‘ not immediately enquire into the conduct of
‘ our past negotiations; and therefore, if we do
‘ not enquire, I shall expect no success in the
‘ war, nor any honour from the peace.

‘ For

‘ For this reason, Sir, I hope, the honourable
‘ gentleman’s arguments against an immediate
‘ enquiry will have no effect; and, if we should
‘ not think fit to make a general enquiry into all
‘ our negotiations, for fear of discovering secrets
‘ that may be of dangerous consequence to the
‘ publick, I hope, this will be no argument a-
‘ gainst our enquiring into such parts of them as
‘ cannot possibly contain any such secret. Of
‘ this sort, I take to be that part of them which
‘ relates to the concluding and signing the late
‘ convention, under the condition expressed in
‘ his Catholick Majesty’s declaration; for that
‘ declaration I must look on as a condition an-
‘ nexed to the convention; and, from Mr. *La*
‘ *Quadra*’s, and from Mr. *Keene*’s own letters,
‘ some parts of which I shall beg leave to read to
‘ you, it appears to have been looked on as such,
‘ by the court of *Spain*, and to have been ac-
‘ cepted as such, by him. (Here he read seve-
‘ ral paragraphs from Mr. *La Quadra*’s and Mr.
‘ *Keene*’s own letters.) From what I have read to
‘ you, Sir, it appears, that the court of *Spain* in-
‘ sisted upon its being declared, that they had a
‘ right to suspend the *Assiento* of negroes, in case
‘ our *South-Sea* company did not subject herself
‘ to pay, within a short term, the 68,000*l.* she
‘ had confessed to be owing to his Catholick Ma-
‘ jesty. It appears, that they not only insisted
‘ upon a declaration of this right, but that they
‘ would not trust to his word; they must have it
‘ in writing; and the method contrived for that
‘ purpose was, that his Catholick Majesty shou’d
‘ make such a declaration in writing, and that
‘ he, Mr. *Keene*, should accept of it, and trans-
‘ mit it to his court, as the condition on which
‘ the signing of the convention was to be pro-
‘ ceeded on, and in no other manner.

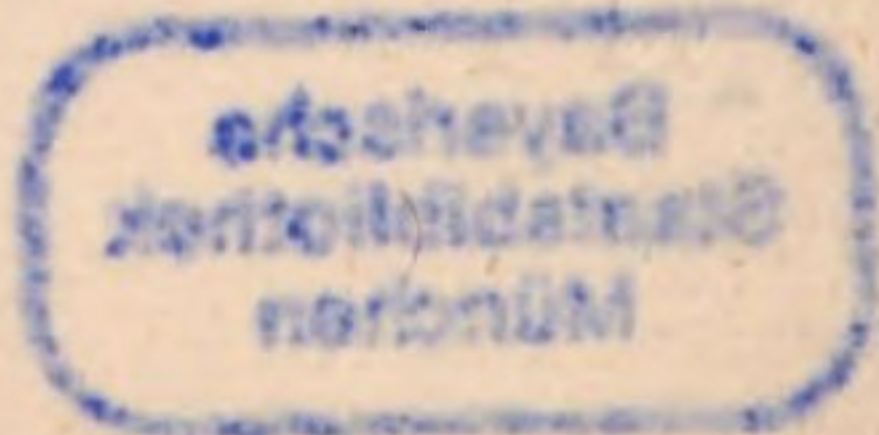
‘ This, I say, Sir, appears from the letters we
 ‘ have already upon our table ; and as the *South-*
 ‘ *Sea* company neither owed, nor ever had con-
 ‘ fessed they owed such a sum ; as Mr. *Keene* must
 ‘ have known they did not, because he was a-
 ‘ gent for them, as well as envoy from his Ma-
 ‘ jesty, at the court of *Spain* ; I cannot imagine,
 ‘ how he came to admit of any such right, or
 ‘ receive such a declaration ; nor can I imagine,
 ‘ how he could have an authority for so doing ;
 ‘ for, regularly he ought to have had an autho-
 ‘ rity from a general court of the *South-Sea* com-
 ‘ pany for this purpose, as well as an authority
 ‘ from his Majesty’s ministers ; and the former,
 ‘ I am certain, he never had, whatever might
 ‘ have been his case with respect to the latter.

‘ As this seems to me to have been a very
 ‘ surprizing and extraordinary step, and as the
 ‘ papers relating to this part of our negotiations
 ‘ can discover no schemes or designs against
 ‘ the enemy, nor any other secrets that can be of
 ‘ dangerous consequence to the publick ; there-
 ‘ fore, I shall conclude, Sir, with moving, That,
 ‘ &c.’ (as mentioned in the third question.)

The next that spoke was *William Pulteney*, Esq;
 the purport of whose speech was to the effect as
 follows, *viz.*

Mr. *Pulte-*
ney’s speech.

‘ Mr. Speaker,
 ‘ Sir, As I hear several gentlemen calling out,
 ‘ No, no, this is the same with the former mo-
 ‘ tion ; I must beg leave to shew the diffe-
 ‘ rence : The only objection that seemed to have
 ‘ any weight against the former motion, and, I
 ‘ believe, the only one that prevailed with this
 ‘ house to put a negative upon it was, the dan-
 ‘ ger of discovering those warlike projects and
 ‘ designs against the enemy, which our ministers
 ‘ had



‘ had concerted, and which are not yet executed.
‘ I am sorry they are not: I am sure, some of
‘ them, if any such have been formed, might,
‘ and ought to have been executed before this
‘ time. Can any gentleman say, we have such
‘ a danger to apprehend from the papers now
‘ moved for? Can it be suggested, that these
‘ papers may contain secrets which it would be
‘ inconsistent with the publick safety to disco-
‘ ver? Sir, they may, for what I know, contain
‘ secrets, but if they do, those secrets are the se-
‘ crets of ministers, and not the secrets of the
‘ nation. It is impossible, therefore, to suppose,
‘ that the laying of those papers before us, can
‘ be attended with any of the bad consequences
‘ we were frightened with upon the last motion.

‘ An honourable gentleman near me com-
‘ plained much in the last debate, of gentlemens
‘ talking of weak measures, corrupt ministers,
‘ and the like; and seemed to take all to him-
‘ self, as if he were the only minister we have in
‘ this kingdom, and the chief adviser of all our
‘ publick measures. Sir, we have other mini-
‘ sters, at least others who have the name of mi-
‘ nisters, and, I hope, they deserve the name
‘ they bear; for, I am sure, if any one minister
‘ should, in this kingdom, take upon him to
‘ direct all our other ministers, they ought all
‘ together to be dismissed his Majesty’s councils:
‘ He for his assuming arrogance, and they for
‘ their tame submission. But, I hope, it is not
‘ so, and therefore, when weak measures, or
‘ corrupt ministers are talked of, the honourable
‘ gentleman should consider, that other ministers
‘ may be meant, and measures which he had no
‘ share in advising or conducting. He likewise
‘ complained, that his suppositions were often
‘ taken for positive assertions. When this was,
‘ I do not know; but, I must observe, that the

‘ very insinuations of a minister are often, by
‘ his own creatures, taken for positive assertions,
‘ and produce the same effect; and as the ho-
‘ nourable gentleman, in the last debate, took
‘ the liberty to suppose without asserting, what-
‘ ever effect his suppositions might have, I hope,
‘ I may be allowed to take the same liberty. I
‘ will not assert, Sir, that any of our present
‘ ministers are corrupt, or that any of our past
‘ measures were weak; but, I may suppose such
‘ things. There may be corrupt ministers, there
‘ may be weak measures: God forbid, I should
‘ assert, there are any such at present in this
‘ kingdom; but, if such things can be supposed,
‘ it is a good reason for our Parliaments to keep
‘ a watchful eye upon our publick affairs, and to
‘ enquire often both into the conduct of our mi-
‘ nisters, and the wisdom of the measures they
‘ pursue. This is at all times the duty of Par-
‘ liament, but more so in time of war, than in
‘ time of peace; because weak measures may
‘ then do much more mischief, and as ministers
‘ have then more money going through their fin-
‘ gers, they may, if they are corrupt, spread
‘ their corruption farther, and squander away
‘ more of the publick money, than they can do
‘ in time of peace.

‘ A time of war is, therefore, so far from be-
‘ ing an improper time for a parliamentary en-
‘ quiry, that such enquiries are more necessary,
‘ and ought to be more frequent in time of war,
‘ than in time of peace. Such enquiries, Sir,
‘ never of themselves create parties or divisions
‘ in the kingdom, nor do they ever raise any
‘ heats or animosities. Indeed, when there are
‘ parties already formed upon different princi-
‘ ples, and governed by different maxims, and
‘ one of those parties gets the reins of govern-
‘ ment out of the hands of the other, and pro-
‘ secutes

‘ secutes the heads of the other, for what they
‘ did in pursuance of the principles and maxims
‘ of their party, this of course stirs up heats and
‘ animosities between the two parties, because
‘ all those who have embraced the principles and
‘ maxims of the party, must approve of, and
‘ consequently will zealously endeavour to justify
‘ and support, what was done in pursuance of
‘ those principles and maxims. This was the
‘ case of the parliamentary enquiry mentioned
‘ in this debate ; but, is this the case at present ?
‘ Sir, the enquiry now desired by so many gen-
‘ tlemen in this house, and, I may say, by the
‘ whole nation without doors, has no relation to
‘ any difference of principles : It can relate to
‘ nothing but the good or bad administration of
‘ publick affairs. No man condemns, no man
‘ will condemn the principle upon which our
‘ pacifick gentlemen pretend to have acted : No
‘ man will say, that forcible means ought to be
‘ made use of for obtaining justice from any fo-
‘ reign nation, whilst there are hopes of ob-
‘ taining justice in an amicable way ; but, it is
‘ said, and loudly said without doors, that our
‘ pacifick gentlemen did not act upon this prin-
‘ ciple, or pursued it too far, if they did. This
‘ is the question, Sir : Upon this question there
‘ will be a difference in opinion, whether we
‘ enquire into it or no ; and we ought to en-
‘ quire, in order to put an end to that difference ;
‘ for, I believe, it will be allowed, that those
‘ who approve, as well as those who condemn,
‘ are at present in the dark ; and as the majority
‘ of the nation are now of the latter side of the
‘ question, therefore, as a friend to our ministers,
‘ I am for a fair and impartial enquiry, because,
‘ I hope, it will bring the majority of the na-
‘ tion over to their side of the question.

‘ If there were no cause to suspect our late
‘ measures of any weakness, if there were no
‘ considerable party in the kingdom, that ap-
‘ peared dissatisfied with them, it might, per-
‘ haps, be unnecessary to take up our time with
‘ examining into them; but this is far from be-
‘ ing the case: There is not only good cause to
‘ suspect, but upon the face of the convention,
‘ there appears now to be good cause to con-
‘ demn. When that convention was last year
‘ laid before us, some gentlemen did not, per-
‘ haps, consider what was meant by having the
‘ point of search referred to be regulated by ple-
‘ nipotentiaries, nor did they consider what was
‘ meant by his Catholick Majesty’s declaration
‘ that was tacked to the tail of it. But the King
‘ of *Spain*, in his manifesto’s, has now explain-
‘ ed both. He has told us, our plenipotentiaries
‘ could not insist upon his giving up the point of
‘ search, because by the convention it was ex-
‘ pressly referred to be regulated. He has told us,
‘ we could not refuse allowing him to suspend
‘ the *Assiento* of negroes, in case our *South-Sea*
‘ company did not pay him the 68,000*l.* because
‘ he had expressly, by his declaration, which was
‘ a part of the convention, reserved to himself
‘ that right. This is the light, Sir, in which
‘ the court of *Spain* considers these two points:
‘ This is the light in which all *Europe*, I believe,
‘ considers them; and in this light I then con-
‘ sidered them. I then said, that referring a
‘ right to be regulated, was an admitting that
‘ there was such a right. I then said, that our
‘ minister’s accepting of the declaration, was an
‘ admitting it as a part of the convention, and
‘ as the condition upon which the convention
‘ was to subsist. We therefore ought to enquire,
‘ whether Mr. *Keene* had a proper order for ac-
‘ cepting it: If he had not, he was certainly
‘ guilty

‘ guilty of a breach of his duty ; and, in my
 ‘ opinion, no minister could give, or advise giv-
 ‘ ing him such an order. The right, the estate
 ‘ of a great company was thereby given away,
 ‘ and will any gentleman say, a minister can
 ‘ give away a person’s estate without his con-
 ‘ sent? If we had been reduced by the misfor-
 ‘ tunes of war to sacrifice the rights and proper-
 ‘ ties of a few private men to the publick safety,
 ‘ something might have been said by way of ex-
 ‘ cuse for such a sacrifice ; but surely no minister
 ‘ is wantonly, and without so much as an ap-
 ‘ pearance of necessity, to give up the right or
 ‘ the property of any one subject in the king-
 ‘ dom without his consent. Therefore, as the
 ‘ accepting of that declaration in the solemn
 ‘ manner, the letters that have been read to you
 ‘ shew, it was accepted of, must be allowed to
 ‘ be at least a weakness, I think it absolutely ne-
 ‘ cessary for us to make some enquiry into that
 ‘ affair, and for this purpose we must have the
 ‘ papers moved for, laid before us.’

The next speech we shall give was made
 by Sir *William Yonge*, which was in substance
 thus.

‘ Mr. Speaker.

‘ Sir, I am glad of this opportunity to vindi-
 ‘ cate an honourable gentleman who was con-
 ‘ cerned in these negotiations, and who, from
 ‘ the whole tenor of his conduct, appears to
 ‘ have been as able and as honest a minister, as
 ‘ was ever employed by this nation. As for the
 ‘ convention itself, Sir, he has already been fully
 ‘ justified with regard to every article contained
 ‘ in it, because the whole was approved of by
 ‘ his Majesty, and by both houses of Parlia-
 ‘ ment ; and after the solemn approbation it met

*Sir William
 Yonge’s
 speech.*

‘ with from all the branches of our legislature,
‘ I am surprized to hear any gentleman now
‘ finding fault with it, or with any one who was
‘ concerned in the negotiation. All the objec-
‘ tions that were made to it, were fully answered
‘ at the time it was under our consideration;
‘ and as the objections now made are only repe-
‘ titions of what was then fully answered, it
‘ would be wrong in me to take up your time
‘ with repeating those answers.

‘ Sir, the honourable gentleman may as well
‘ say, that every letter wrote by Mr. *La Quadra*
‘ to Mr. *Keene* was a part of the convention, as
‘ to say, that a declaration signed by Mr. *La*
‘ *Quadra* only, was a part of a treaty which was
‘ concluded and signed by the ministers of both
‘ the contracting parties, and ratified by their
‘ respective Sovereigns. By such a declaration
‘ the King of *Spain* could neither get a new
‘ right, nor the confirmation of any old right.
‘ He did not so much as mean to get any such
‘ thing. He thereby meant no more, than to
‘ reserve to himself a right to suspend the *Assi-*
‘ *ento* of negroes upon non-performance on the
‘ part of our *South-Sea* company. This he
‘ thought he had a right to do, because of
‘ the *Assiento*’s being a mutual contract; and he
‘ thought it necessary to reserve this right, by
‘ a declaration in writing, because the *Assiento*
‘ treaty was, among the rest, mentioned in the
‘ body of the convention; but Mr. *Keene* had
‘ nothing to do with this declaration: He did
‘ not admit the right which his Catholick Ma-
‘ jesty pretended to, nor did he accept of the
‘ declaration with any such view, or for any
‘ such purpose. He only promised, he would
‘ send a copy of it to his court, and another to
‘ the *South-Sea* company. Mr. *Keene*, therefore,
‘ cannot be so much as suspected of having done
‘ any

‘ any thing amiss in that negotiation ; and as
‘ the treaty itself was approved of by Parlia-
‘ ment, I can see no occasion for our enquiring
‘ into the negotiation.

‘ But, Sir, suppose there were an occasion for
‘ our doing so, can we, consistently with what
‘ we have this day already done, agree to the
‘ honourable gentleman’s motion ? The motion
‘ seems, indeed, to refer to a particular point,
‘ but it will include all or most of the papers
‘ referred to in the two former motions ; and
‘ therefore, the same reasons that prevailed with
‘ us to put a negative upon them, must prevail
‘ with us to put a negative upon this also. Be-
‘ sides, Sir, if *Spain* could have been prevailed
‘ on to have accepted of some few reasonable
‘ concessions on our side, I believe it will be al-
‘ lowed, that it would have been prudent in us
‘ to have made some such concessions, rather
‘ than have come to an open rupture with a na-
‘ tion, we have so much reason to be friends
‘ with, and at a time which, I am sure, cannot
‘ be called the most favourable for this nation’s
‘ declaring war. It is, therefore, highly pro-
‘ bable that Mr. *Keene* had instructions to pro-
‘ pose or agree to some such concessions : I shall
‘ not say there were any such, but, now the war
‘ is declared, would it not be unwise, would it
‘ not be ridiculous in us, to let *Spain* know what
‘ concessions we were willing to make for the
‘ sake of peace ? And, if our minister’s instruc-
‘ tions for this purpose were all laid before this
‘ assembly, and ordered to lie on our table, can
‘ we suppose, that the court of *Spain* would not
‘ get an account of them ? Sir, I make no
‘ question, but that copies of them would be
‘ sent to that court ; and this would certainly
‘ contribute towards making them more obsti-
‘ nate, and consequently, towards the prolonga-
‘ tion

‘ tion of the war ; for whatever concessions we
 ‘ might have been willing to make for prevent-
 ‘ ing a war, now it is begun, I hope, we shall
 ‘ have no occasion to make any for putting an
 ‘ end to it. I hope, the war will be attended
 ‘ with such success, that we shall soon be in a
 ‘ condition to prescribe our own terms. It will
 ‘ probably be so, if we do not prevent or retard
 ‘ our success, by factions and divisions amongst
 ‘ ourselves. But, if *Spain* should know what
 ‘ concessions we were willing to make for the
 ‘ sake of peace, will she not the more obsti-
 ‘ nately persist in refusing the terms of peace we
 ‘ may hereafter think fit to prescribe ?

‘ From hence, Sir, we may see, that it would
 ‘ probably be of a most pernicious consequence
 ‘ to the nation, to have those papers laid before
 ‘ us ; and therefore, it must be allowed, that it
 ‘ would be wrong in us to address for them.’

The next that spoke was *Samuel Sandys, Esq;*
 the purport of whose speech was thus.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Sandys's speech.

‘ Sir, I am extremely surprized, to hear gen-
 ‘ tlemen still insist upon the late convention's
 ‘ having been approved by Parliament. Sir, it
 ‘ was not approved by either house of Parlia-
 ‘ ment : An honourable gentleman in the last de-
 ‘ bate allowed, that it was not approved ; and
 ‘ said, the Parliament only advised his Majesty
 ‘ to proceed upon the footing of that conven-
 ‘ tion. Why did they so, Sir ? Because that
 ‘ very gentleman and his friends most confi-
 ‘ dently assured us, that it would, at last, pro-
 ‘ duce a safe and honourable peace. Upon these
 ‘ assurances, the advice of Parliament was found-
 ‘ ed, and not upon any thing that appeared
 ‘ upon the face of the treaty. Gentlemen then
 ‘ thought,

‘ thought, that if it should produce a safe and
‘ honourable peace, it would in the end appear
‘ to be a good treaty; and therefore they would
‘ not condemn it, because such a condemnation
‘ would have prevented an effect which they
‘ were assured of, and which every man desired
‘ to see. But these assurances having failed, the
‘ foundation the Parliament had for giving that
‘ advice is taken away; and every one must
‘ now join in thinking it a bad treaty, because
‘ it put the nation to near half a million ex-
‘ pence, without gaining to us the least advan-
‘ tage; unless the war is to be called an advan-
‘ tage, and when compared with our former
‘ peaceable negotiations, it must be allowed to
‘ be so. But even the war is not to be ascribed
‘ to that treaty, but to the disdain the nation
‘ shewed at seeing such a treaty agreed to; for
‘ the treaty itself was nothing but an expedient,
‘ for preventing our reaping this melancholy ad-
‘ vantage for a while longer, and the advice of
‘ Parliament was obtained as a second expedient,
‘ for preventing the condemnation of the first.

‘ With regard, Sir, to the declaration or pro-
‘ test tack’d to the end of this treaty, I remem-
‘ ber it was said last year, that it had no more
‘ relation to the convention, than it had to the
‘ grand alliance; and this was then, perhaps,
‘ believed by many gentlemen in this house:
‘ But it now appears, that the court of *Spain* are
‘ of a very different opinion; and, I believe,
‘ there is not a civilian in *Europe* that is not of
‘ their opinion. Our minister accepted of it in
‘ the most solemn manner; and seeing he did
‘ so, he must have accepted it in the terms ex-
‘ pressed in the very body of it, as the basis of
‘ the treaty, as the condition upon which the
‘ King of *Spain* signed the convention; there-
‘ fore, if it was not an article in the treaty it-
‘ self,

‘ self, it was the chief article in the agreement
 ‘ previous to that treaty. This, I believe, Sir,
 ‘ was truly the case, and if the papers now called
 ‘ for should be laid before us, I believe, it will
 ‘ appear to have been so ; for there was a treaty
 ‘ signed by the ministers on both sides, anterior
 ‘ to the treaty afterwards laid before Parliament,
 ‘ and in this treaty, if common fame speaks
 ‘ true, this declaration, or the substance of it,
 ‘ was an express article ; but this was giving up
 ‘ the right of the nation, and the right of the
 ‘ *South-Sea* company, in so direct a manner, that
 ‘ it was not thought safe to ratify it ; and there-
 ‘ fore, I suppose, the expedient was agreed to,
 ‘ of having this article annexed to the treaty,
 ‘ by way of protest or declaration.

‘ But, Sir, was not this in effect the same ?
 ‘ Was not our accepting, or even admitting
 ‘ such a declaration to be made, a tacit acknow-
 ‘ ledgment of the right therein claimed ? The
 ‘ King of *Spain* pretended to a right of suspend-
 ‘ ing the *Affiento* contract, upon whatever he may
 ‘ be pleased to call a non-performance on the
 ‘ part of our *South-Sea* company : He not only
 ‘ pretended to such a right, but he has actually
 ‘ exercised it ; he has suspended the chief part
 ‘ of this contract, almost ever since it was made ;
 ‘ and, upon a treaty, he insists upon this right
 ‘ being reserved to him, either by an article in
 ‘ the treaty, or by a protestation to be delivered
 ‘ to us in the most solemn manner, at the time
 ‘ of his signing the treaty. Could we, in ho-
 ‘ nour or in justice to ourselves, admit of any
 ‘ such thing ? Ought we not to have insisted
 ‘ upon his giving up such an unjust claim, by
 ‘ an express article in the treaty ? But I do not
 ‘ wonder at our minister’s admitting it : The ho-
 ‘ nourable gentleman that spoke last, seems to
 ‘ admit it ; and he is, I believe, pretty well ac-
 ‘ quainted

‘ acquainted with the complexion of our negotia-
‘ tors. He told us, the King of *Spain* thought
‘ he had such a right, because of the *Assiento*’s
‘ being a mutual contract: I shall grant it is a
‘ mutual contract, but it is between the two na-
‘ tions: We have appointed the *South-Sea* com-
‘ pany to perform it on our part; if they should
‘ fail in the performance of what they have un-
‘ dertaken, the King of *Spain* is not to suspend,
‘ immediately, the contract; he has no right to
‘ do so; he ought to apply to our court; and,
‘ if the *South-Sea* company has really failed in
‘ the performance, we are in honour obliged to
‘ make them perform: If they have not failed;
‘ if the complaint against them be unjust, we
‘ are in honour obliged to protect them, let the
‘ consequence be what it will.

‘ We ought therefore, Sir, to have insisted
‘ upon the King of *Spain*’s giving up the right
‘ he pretended to; but instead of this, we al-
‘ lowed him to reserve it in a tacit manner, and
‘ allowed him to deliver us a protestation for
‘ that purpose. We have therefore, at least ta-
‘ citly, admitted of his claim: The court of
‘ *Spain* thought so; they had reason to think so;
‘ and they will accuse us of tricking and shuf-
‘ fling, if we now pretend to deny it. We must
‘ now, either acknowledge this right, or give
‘ the *Spaniards* just cause to have a very bad opi-
‘ nion of us. This dilemma the nation has been
‘ brought into by our negotiators; and, in all
‘ such cases, it is the duty of Parliament to in-
‘ quire strictly into the affair, in order that the
‘ innocent may be cleared of suspicion, and the
‘ guilty meet with condign punishment.

‘ The pains now taken, Sir, to shew, that we
‘ never did admit of this claim, is an acknow-
‘ ledgment, that it was wrong to do so. Sup-
‘ pose,

‘ pose, then, our minister in *Spain* did not admit
 ‘ of this right or claim, by accepting of this de-
 ‘ claration, yet, surely he did so, when he sign-
 ‘ ed a treaty in which the reservation of this
 ‘ right was an express article; and if he did so,
 ‘ that treaty’s not being ratified here, can be no
 ‘ excuse for his having signed it. For this rea-
 ‘ son, if there was any such treaty, as common
 ‘ fame reports, Mr. *Keene* is not altogether so
 ‘ blameless as the honourable gentleman repre-
 ‘ sents, unless he had an express order for doing
 ‘ so; and if he had, I am sure, those who gave
 ‘ him that order, are not without blame. This
 ‘ is what we want to know; this is what we
 ‘ ought to inquire into; and for this purpose, it
 ‘ is necessary for us to have the papers now mo-
 ‘ ved for, laid before us.

‘ Is it possible to suppose, Sir, that by an ad-
 ‘ dress for the instructions and letters sent to Mr.
 ‘ *Keene*, authorizing him to conclude and sign
 ‘ the convention; I say, is it possible we can
 ‘ thereby mean or design, to have laid before us
 ‘ all the memorials and representations made to
 ‘ the King of *Spain*, or all the instructions and
 ‘ letters sent to our governors or admirals, rela-
 ‘ ting to the *Spanish* depredations, most of which
 ‘ happened before the convention was so much
 ‘ as thought of? Sir, it is needless to argue with
 ‘ one who can, or will suppose any such thing.
 ‘ But the honourable gentleman has hit upon the
 ‘ true reason that will, I am afraid, prevent our
 ‘ seeing the papers called for, or any other of
 ‘ the like nature: He says, our seeing those pa-
 ‘ pers may let *Spain* see what concessions we were
 ‘ willing to make for the sake of peace. Sir, I
 ‘ believe, we have no occasion to be afraid of
 ‘ *Spain*’s seeing these concessions; I believe they
 ‘ were before too well acquainted with them;

‘ and this, I believe, was the chief cause of their
‘ past obstinacy ; for, I fear, we made so many
‘ concessions, that we made them believe, we
‘ would yield any thing, rather than go to war.
‘ Thank God ! we have now convinced them of
‘ the contrary ; and are, I hope, in a way of
‘ making them more pliable for the future. But
‘ if we were willing to make any concessions,
‘ which *Spain* has not, as yet, been made ac-
‘ quainted with, I can see no danger to the na-
‘ tion, if they should be published to the whole
‘ world : They may shew too great complai-
‘ sance, perhaps pusillanimity, in our ministers,
‘ but they will serve to justify the nation to the
‘ whole world ; and with regard to *Spain*, I hope
‘ we shall never more think of conquering their
‘ obstinacy by negotiation. Now that war is de-
‘ clared, if one blow does not make them sub-
‘ mit, we must, as soon as possible, give them
‘ another ; and if that will not do, a third,
‘ which, I am convinced, is the speediest and
‘ best way of negotiating a peace with that na-
‘ tion. We cannot, therefore, be afraid of
‘ *Spain*’s seeing what concessions we were willing
‘ to make for the sake of peace ; but there may
‘ be some amongst us, who are afraid, lest the
‘ nation or Parliament of *Great Britain* should
‘ see what concessions they were willing to make
‘ for the sake of peace. Here, I am convin-
‘ ced, it is, Sir, that the shoe pinches ; but, as
‘ this shoe neither pinches me, nor any of my
‘ friends, and as, I think, the Parliament ought
‘ to guard against any such concessions being
‘ made for the future ; therefore, I am for our
‘ seeing them, and every paper that can give us
‘ a light into any of them.’

George

George Lyttleton, Esq; next stood up, and spoke to this effect, viz.

Mr. Lyttleton's speech.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, It is most amazing to me, to hear it
‘ said, that this question is the same with the
‘ two former; whereas it is a single question,
‘ wholly confined to one particular point. The
‘ objection made to them was, that they would
‘ shew our enemies where we intended to hurt
‘ them, and thereby put them upon their guard;
‘ but what does this do? It can only shew this
‘ nation how we have been served by our own
‘ ministers, and put us upon our guard against
‘ them, if they have not served us so well as
‘ they ought.

‘ Sir, I always thought it very necessary we
‘ should go into a war against *Spain*, but I am
‘ much confirmed in that opinion, from what
‘ has happened to day in this house; for, what
‘ a condition should we have been in, if we had
‘ still continued those negotiations, which, tho’
‘ they are now quite over, are thought, by those
‘ who favoured them most, to be of such a na-
‘ ture, as will not bear seeing the light? And
‘ therefore, I really think, we are obliged to the
‘ insolence of *Spain*, who, encouraged by our
‘ long insensibility, refused to give us the mess
‘ of pottage, for which we were so near selling
‘ our birth-right. For what a dreadful situation
‘ should we have been in, if she had not? The
‘ *South-Sea* company must either have lost all the
‘ rights of their trade, or have been obliged to
‘ comply with the most monstrous demand, that
‘ ever was made upon any body of men under
‘ the protection of the King of *Great Britain*.
‘ Gentlemen talk of a right in the King of
‘ *Spain* to suspend the *Assiento* contract: Yes, he
‘ had

‘ had such a right, if the company had fail’d in
‘ their part of the contract; but not for their
‘ refusing to pay the 68,000*l*. And yet, to this
‘ injustice, this violence, the company must have
‘ submitted, with the *reciprocal accord* of their
‘ own agent, and his Majesty’s minister.

‘ Sir, the two most astonishing propositions I
‘ ever heard in my life, are, that the address we
‘ carried last week to the King, was, in reality,
‘ a part of the convention, and that the protest
‘ of Mr. *La Quadra* was not a part of it. It
‘ was the *sine quâ non* of the agreement, under
‘ which the convention was signed; and we
‘ should have found it so to our cost, if the spi-
‘ rit of the nation had not exerted itself; but
‘ because we escaped the danger, must we lose
‘ the sense of it too? I hope we shall act so in
‘ this war, as to make all *Europe* forget, how
‘ we acted before; but let us not forget it our-
‘ selves: Let us keep it always in our thoughts,
‘ to be a warning to us, not to relapse any more
‘ into that itch for negotiation, that love of lit-
‘ tle shuffling expedients, that mean submissive
‘ policy, we are so happily rid of at last. Let
‘ us remember the risk we run, and let us in-
‘ quire to whom it was owing.

‘ Sir, I think we ought to demand these in-
‘ structions upon the same principle of equity,
‘ by which an innocent man, who has been tried
‘ for his life, and escapes, is allowed a copy of
‘ the indictment, that if he has a mind to pro-
‘ secute those, who brought him into that dan-
‘ ger, he may. I will add but two or three
‘ words more to the trouble I have given you:
‘ The people of *England* are not so ignorant as
‘ some persons suppose; they know the conven-
‘ tion from the excise; they know what they
‘ should think of it; they would be glad to
‘ know whom they owe it to; and they will un-

‘ derstand perfectly well, if a negative be given
 ‘ to this motion, what that negative means.’

The next that spoke was Sir *John Barnard*, the purport of whose speech was as follows, *viz.*

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Sir *John*
Barnard's
speech.

‘ Sir, As I have often heard a certain set of
 ‘ gentlemen insist upon it, both here and in o-
 ‘ ther places, that the declaration or protest in
 ‘ question had no manner of relation to the con-
 ‘ vention, I should be glad those gentlemen
 ‘ would inform us, what it had relation to, or
 ‘ for what purpose it was made, and so formally
 ‘ accepted of. I am very certain, the court of
 ‘ *Spain* meant something by making it; I am
 ‘ convinced, they supposed we meant some-
 ‘ thing by receiving it: If they had meant,
 ‘ or intended to mean nothing, I am sure,
 ‘ they would not have made it; and if we did
 ‘ not mean to accept it in the terms in which
 ‘ it was conceived, and for the purpose which,
 ‘ we knew, they meant by it, I am sure our mi-
 ‘ nister, at least, meant to deceive them. There-
 ‘ fore, if we received it as the *Spaniards* meant
 ‘ it; if we received it as the condition on which
 ‘ the signing of the convention was to be pro-
 ‘ ceeded on, I am very sure, the conduct of our
 ‘ minister ought not only to be inquired into,
 ‘ but censured. And, if we meant to deceive
 ‘ the court of *Spain*, by receiving that declara-
 ‘ tion; if we thereby meant to draw the court
 ‘ of *Spain* in to sign a convention, under the
 ‘ false hopes that we would look upon that de-
 ‘ claration in the same light they did, the con-
 ‘ duct of our minister, in my opinion, deserves as
 ‘ much to be censured in this case, as in the other.
 ‘ Openness of heart, sincerity, and plain-deal-
 ‘ ing, have always been a distinguishing charac-
 ‘ teristick of this nation. It is generally the
 ‘ charac-

characteristick of a brave people. By continuing our negotiations under so many insults, I am afraid, we gave the *Spaniards* some room to suspect our courage; I hope we have not, in our method of treating, given them room to suspect also our sincerity. Sir, this nation had never yet an occasion to make use of querks or subterfuges, or of any sort of deceit, for obtaining justice. A convention of some kind or other might, at that time, be necessary for some amongst us here at home, as an expedient for excusing themselves to the ensuing session of Parliament, but it was not necessary for the nation; and therefore, if deceitful means were used, for obtaining the concurrence of the court of *Spain* in furnishing out such an expedient, I will affirm, that those who did so, were guilty of sacrificing the honour and interest of their country to some selfish ends of their own.

For this reason, Sir, I am for the motion made by my honourable friend; for if it does not upon an inquiry appear, that our minister at the court of *Spain* declared, in the most open and plain terms, that he would not accept of that declaration, as the condition upon which the treaty was to be signed; that his court would not receive it as such, nor ever admit of his Catholick Majesty's suspending the *Affiento* contract, on account of the non-payment of the 68,000*l.* then claimed by *Spain*: I say, Sir, if this does not appear, I shall be for censuring the conduct, at least of our minister abroad, and perhaps of some of those at home. From the papers already upon our table it does appear, that he accepted of that declaration, that he accepted of it in the most solemn manner; but it does not appear from any of the papers yet before us, that he made such a

‘ counter-declaration, as I have mentioned :
‘ Therefore, in justice to him, I desire to be
‘ informed, because, by the papers before us,
‘ he now stands condemned, and therefore I de-
‘ sire to see those that may be pleaded in his jus-
‘ tification, if there be any such : In justice to
‘ my country I desire to be informed, because, as
‘ a member of this house, I am obliged to cen-
‘ sure him, if, by his conduct, his country has
‘ forfeited that character, which it has long pre-
‘ served, and which it is both our honour and
‘ interest still to preserve.

‘ Thus, Sir, the very argument that has been
‘ made use of in this debate, for not calling for
‘ Mr. *Keene*’s instructions, is, with me, an unan-
‘ swerable argument for our doing so. If by ac-
‘ cepting the declaration of the court of *Spain*,
‘ we did not mean what the court of *Spain*
‘ meant in delivering it, we ought to have told
‘ them so : Let us see, whether we did or no :
‘ And if by accepting it, we meant the same
‘ thing they meant in delivering it, we then
‘ meant to accept of a treaty or convention un-
‘ der the condition expressed in that declaration.
‘ By so doing, we acknowledged the 68,000 *l.*
‘ to be justly due to them by our *South-Sea* com-
‘ pany ; we acknowledged, that this sum ought
‘ to be immediately paid, without any regard to
‘ the large claims our company had upon the
‘ crown of *Spain* ; and we acknowledged, that
‘ unless our company paid that sum within a
‘ short term, the King of *Spain* had a right to
‘ suspend the *Affiento* of negroes. Will any gen-
‘ tleman say, it was right in our minister to
‘ make such acknowledgments ? Will any gen-
‘ tleman say, he ought not to be censured, if he
‘ did ? Sir, there was no dispute between the
‘ court of *Spain* and our *South-Sea* company,
‘ when the convention first began to be thought
‘ of :

‘ of: They had come to a final agreement, and
‘ that agreement would have stood, if our nego-
‘ tiations about the convention had not unhin-
‘ ged it. The demand of this 68,000 *l.* which
‘ the court of *Spain* made upon our *South-Sea*
‘ company, was, perhaps, an unjust demand,
‘ but the company had agreed to allow it, un-
‘ just as it was, provided the King of *Spain*
‘ would do them justice, as to the many de-
‘ mands they had upon him, and insist only up-
‘ on this sum’s being brought in to the creditor
‘ side of his account: This was the only confes-
‘ sion our company had ever made of this debt:
‘ This was what the court of *Spain* had agreed
‘ to accept of; and this was what Mr. *Keene*, as
‘ he was agent for the company, could not but
‘ know. Was it then right in him to accept, or
‘ admit of a declaration, in which it was insist-
‘ ed, that our company had confessed this sum
‘ to be owing, without so much as one word of
‘ the terms upon which they had agreed to al-
‘ low it? Among politicians, Sir, whose max-
‘ ims, I confess, I do not understand, this may
‘ be justified in the envoy; but among mer-
‘ chants, I am sure, it will never be justified in
‘ the agent.

‘ From what I have said, Sir, it must appear,
‘ that our minister’s accepting, or even admit-
‘ ting of this declaration, without a counter-de-
‘ claration, was wrong; and I desire to know,
‘ the whole nation desires to know, whether there
‘ was any such counter-declaration, and in what
‘ method it was made or delivered. If we are
‘ refused this satisfaction, by a negative’s being
‘ put upon this motion, I shall presume, the
‘ whole nation will presume, there was no such
‘ counter-declaration made or delivered by our
‘ minister; and consequently I shall, the whole
‘ nation will, condemn his conduct, let his fate

‘ in this house be what it will. This, Sir, is a
‘ bad consequence with regard to the character
‘ of the honourable gentleman concerned, but
‘ with regard to the character of this house, it is
‘ a most terrible one; for if Parliaments should
‘ begin to refuse giving satisfaction to the peo-
‘ ple, the people will begin to refuse putting
‘ any confidence in Parliaments; and if this
‘ should ever come to be the case, they not only
‘ may, but they ought to be laid aside. I do
‘ not know, that the character of Parliament e-
‘ ver received a greater stab, than it did by the
‘ seeming approbation of the convention in last
‘ session of Parliament; and if we should, in
‘ this, so far screen the contrivers of that con-
‘ vention, as to refuse to let the people know,
‘ whether they were to blame or not; I say, if
‘ we should do this, now that the chief argu-
‘ ment advanced last year in favour of that con-
‘ vention, appears to have been without founda-
‘ tion, it will, I fear, be a mortal blow.

‘ This, Sir, is a danger that threatens our
‘ constitution in its most tender part; and shall
‘ we expose ourselves to this danger, for the
‘ sake of avoiding the chimerical danger of let-
‘ ting *Spain* see what concessions we were willing
‘ to make for the sake of peace? It is very
‘ plain, I think, Sir, that some amongst us were
‘ willing to have made most extraordinary con-
‘ cessions for the sake of peace; and, for this
‘ very reason, I am for having them enquired
‘ into; for if they should appear to be such as
‘ I suspect, I hope it will be put out of the
‘ power of those that were willing to make
‘ them, ever to make any such for the future,
‘ either to *Spain*, or to any other nation we may
‘ hereafter have a dispute with. No man can
‘ have reason to dread letting *Spain* know what
‘ those

‘ those concessions were, because, I believe, she
‘ was long since fully informed of them ; and
‘ this information was, I am convinced, the
‘ cause of the war ; for her dependence upon
‘ the concessions she was made to hope for, was
‘ the true cause of her obstinacy, and those who
‘ had flattered her with such hopes, at last found,
‘ they had promised her more than they durst
‘ venture to perform. But suppose she were, as
‘ yet, ignorant of the concessions some amongst
‘ us were willing to make for the sake of peace,
‘ her being now informed of them may give her
‘ new cause to repent of her former obstinacy,
‘ but it can give her no hopes for expecting such
‘ at the end of the war, if we carry it on, as I
‘ hope we shall, with vigour and success. The
‘ dread of letting *Spain* know what concessions
‘ we were willing to make for the sake of peace,
‘ can therefore be no argument with any man in
‘ the kingdom for opposing this motion ; but
‘ the dread of letting this nation see what con-
‘ cessions some amongst us seemed willing to
‘ make for the sake of a precarious and disho-
‘ nourable peace, is, I believe, an argument of
‘ great weight with some gentlemen, for oppo-
‘ sing this and every such motion ; and, because
‘ it is an argument with them for opposing, it
‘ is, with me, a most powerful argument for
‘ approving this motion, and every motion of
‘ the same nature ; for, if any dishonourable
‘ concessions were so much as proposed to have
‘ been made, they ought to be exposed, they
‘ ought to be censured, in order to prevent the
‘ like in time to come.’

Upon this gentleman's sitting down, Sir *Robert Walpole* stood up, and spoke to this effect,
viz.

Sir Robert
Walpole's
speech.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, It has generally been reckoned a little
‘ unfair, to take notice of what has been said in
‘ any former debate; but we have now so far
‘ deviated from this rule, that not only what
‘ has been said in former debates, but in former
‘ sessions, is repeated, seldom exactly as it was
‘ spoke, and made use of against gentlemen in
‘ future debates, or future sessions. I remem-
‘ ber, when it was last year insisted on, that the
‘ King of *Spain*’s protest was an article of the
‘ convention, I made use of the expression, that
‘ it was no more an article of the convention
‘ than of the grand alliance. I then thought so,
‘ I think so still: Nothing can be look’d on as
‘ an article of any treaty, unless it be ratified as
‘ well as signed, by both parties concerned; or
‘ unless it be expressly mentioned and referred
‘ to in some of the articles that have been
‘ signed and ratified by both parties. Is this the
‘ case of the protest in question? Was it either
‘ signed or ratified by both parties, or was it
‘ mentioned in any one of the articles of the
‘ treaty? Sir, if it had been made by way of a
‘ separate article, and even signed by our mini-
‘ ster, yet, till it was ratified by his Majesty, it
‘ could not be look’d on as an article of any
‘ treaty between the two nations. Therefore I
‘ still think, I spoke justly when I said, that his
‘ Catholick Majesty’s protest was no more an ar-
‘ ticle of the convention, than of the grand al-
‘ liance.

‘ This protest, Sir, was so far from being an
‘ article, or a part of the treaty, that it was not
‘ so much as signed by our minister: He did
‘ not so much as accept it, he only received it.
‘ Gentlemen may smile at this distinction; but
‘ it is not a distinction without a difference.

‘ There

‘ There is a very great difference between ac-
‘ cepting and receiving. When we accept of
‘ any thing, we accept of it as the giver intends
‘ we should, either as a payment, or as a re-
‘ ward, favour or gratuity ; and then our accept-
‘ ing implies a release, or an obligation of gra-
‘ titude. But when we receive only, we receive
‘ in what terms we please, and may declare them
‘ then, or at any time afterwards. This was the
‘ case of our minister, with regard to his Ca-
‘ tholick Majesty’s protest. He received it only ;
‘ and to shew his candour, as well as to prevent
‘ the court of *Spain*’s being led into any mistake,
‘ he then, upon the spot, declared, that he did
‘ not accept of it as any article or condition of
‘ the treaty, and that he received it, only in or-
‘ der to transmit a copy of it to his court, and
‘ another to the *South-Sea* company. If the court
‘ of *Spain*, therefore, were deceived, they de-
‘ ceived themselves : They were deceived nei-
‘ ther by the expressions, nor by the silence of
‘ our minister. But whatever they may now
‘ pretend, I believe, they neither deceived them-
‘ selves, nor were deceived by our minister. I
‘ believe, they did not so much as expect, that
‘ we should shew any regard to their protest.
‘ It related to an affair of a particular and per-
‘ plexed nature, which could not be brought
‘ into a general treaty between the two nations.
‘ The accounts between the King of *Spain* and
‘ our *South-Sea* company was an affair that no
‘ way related to either of the nations in general ;
‘ and it was an affair of such a perplexed nature,
‘ that it could not be brought into the negotia-
‘ tion for a general treaty. Like the dispute a-
‘ bout the limits between *Florida* and *Carolina*, it
‘ was absolutely necessary to refer it to plenipo-
‘ tentiaries, to be examined into, and determi-
‘ ned by them, after the conclusion of the ge-
‘ neral

‘ neral treaty, as is customary in all such cases;
 ‘ and therefore it came properly under the first
 ‘ article of the treaty, by which ministers plenipotentiaries were to be appointed for regulating finally the pretensions of the two crowns, remaining to be adjusted; the whole, according to the treaties therein mentioned, of which that of the *Assiento* of negroes is particularly one.

‘ If we consider the affair in this light, and this is the only light in which it can properly be considered, we may easily see, what the court of *Spain* meant by this protest. As the *Assiento* of negroes was a mutual contract between the two nations, the King of *Spain* thought he had a right to suspend the performance of his part of it, in case we refused the performance of ours; and this he certainly has. No gentleman has said, he has a right to suspend the *Assiento* of negroes upon any pretended failure in our *South-Sea* company, and without applying to our court for redress. But, if our *South-Sea* company should be guilty of a real, and not a pretended failure; and if, upon application to our court, we should refuse, or unreasonably delay compelling our *South-Sea* company to do him justice, he would certainly then have a right to suspend the *Assiento* treaty upon his part; and this right he was afraid might be injured, or derogated from, by that treaty’s being particularly mentioned in the first article of the convention; for which reason he thought it necessary to reserve that right by an express declaration. This was all that even the court of *Spain* meant by that protest. It could not give them any new right, nor confirm any right they wrongfully pretended to. It was intended only to shew, that his Catholic Majesty did not, by the first article of the

‘ con-

‘ convention, give up any right he might have
‘ to suspend the *Affiento* treaty, upon a failure of
‘ performance on the part of this nation ; and as
‘ the plenipotentiaries appointed by both na-
‘ tions, and not the court of *Spain* alone, were
‘ to determine, whether the non-payment of the
‘ 68,000*l.* was a failure on the part of this na-
‘ tion, it would have been a piece of perfect
‘ *Don-Quixotism* in us, to have refused admitting
‘ the court of *Spain* to make such a declaration
‘ or protest ; because, if our plenipotentiaries
‘ had determined, that this sum was due to the
‘ King of *Spain*, and that it ought to be imme-
‘ diately paid by our *South-Sea* company, we
‘ certainly ought, and, I believe, we should
‘ have compelled that company to have paid it ;
‘ and if our plenipotentiaries had determined,
‘ that it was not due, or that the King of *Spain*
‘ ought to allow it in whole, or in part of what
‘ was due by him to the company, his protest
‘ would then have been of no manner of signifi-
‘ cation.

‘ In my opinion, Sir, it is evident from the
‘ very nature of the thing, as well as from the
‘ papers already on your table, that Mr. *Keene*
‘ neither received this protest as any article, con-
‘ dition, or part of the treaty, nor did he either
‘ by his expressions, or his silence, endeavour to
‘ deceive the court of *Spain* ; and therefore, nei-
‘ ther of the arguments made use of by the ho-
‘ nourable gentleman that spoke last, can be of
‘ any weight in the present question ; nor will
‘ our refusing to distress the government by dis-
‘ covering its secrets, or to take up our own
‘ time with enquiries, when there does not so
‘ much as seem to have been any fault commit-
‘ ted : I say, our refusing to do so, can be look-
‘ ed upon by no impartial man in the kingdom,
‘ as a refusing to let the people know, whether
‘ those

‘ those who negotiated and concluded the con-
 ‘ vention were to blame in what they did. There
 ‘ are, indeed, some men in the nation, and per-
 ‘ haps some gentlemen in this house, so much
 ‘ prejudiced against the convention, that with-
 ‘ out enquiry, they think every man blameable
 ‘ who had any hand either in negotiating or ad-
 ‘ vising it; but I am sure, I may at least say,
 ‘ that the majority of both houses of Parliament
 ‘ thought otherwise last session, and I can see no
 ‘ reason for their thinking otherwise now. The
 ‘ hopes that the convention would, at last, pro-
 ‘ duce an honourable and advantageous peace,
 ‘ without war or bloodshed, was a good reason
 ‘ for concluding it, and a good reason for ap-
 ‘ proving it; and, if this was then a good argu-
 ‘ ment, can what has happened since, can the
 ‘ *Spaniards* having since committed a most noto-
 ‘ rious breach of publick faith, any way dero-
 ‘ gate from the strength of that argument? Can
 ‘ it throw any blame upon those who put a trust
 ‘ in hopes founded upon a most solemn treaty?
 ‘ At this rate, Sir, no minister must ever con-
 ‘ clude, or advise agreeing to any treaty; for
 ‘ the most full, the most explicit, the most de-
 ‘ finitive treaty, may be broke thro’, as well as
 ‘ that preliminary was; and if a minister must
 ‘ answer for the breaches of faith committed by
 ‘ the nation he treats with, I am sure, he ought
 ‘ never, in prudence, to treat with any. The
 ‘ breach of faith committed by the *Spaniards*,
 ‘ can therefore now be no more an argument for
 ‘ condemning that treaty, than the fear of their
 ‘ doing so, could be an argument for condemn-
 ‘ ing it, when it was under the consideration of
 ‘ this house.

‘ This, Sir, is, I believe, the way of think-
 ‘ ing with all the unprejudiced and impartial
 ‘ men in the kingdom, which, I hope, will al-

ways be, by far, the greatest part ; and surely,
we are not to take up our time in this house,
which may be otherwise so well employed,
with enquiries, in order to remove the preju-
dices of a few ; and much less ought we to
do so, when that enquiry may probably be at-
tended with great danger to the publick, which
is the case of the enquiry now moved for. I
shall grant, that *Spain* has now no reason to ex-
pect those concessions we were willing to make
for the sake of avoiding a war ; but nations as
well as private men often expect without the
least shadow of reason. If *Spain* should be in-
formed of all the concessions we were willing
to make, it will shew her the value we put
upon her friendship, and this will make her
persist more obstinately in the war. Her obsti-
nacy, it is true, may be attended with her ruin ;
but this, I am sure, is what must be allowed
not to be our interest to pursue. We ought
to insist upon her doing us justice, and, I hope,
we shall soon obtain it, if we do not encourage
her to persist obstinately in the war ; but, we
ought to aim at it by weakening that nation as
little as possible, because she may, probably,
hereafter become our friend and ally, and we
may have occasion for her assistance. I am far
from thinking, that any dishonourable conces-
sions were proposed to be made, and yet, I am
convinced, the *Spaniards* know very little of
the concessions we were willing to make. I
hope, they never shall ; but, if they should be
fully apprized of the concessions we were will-
ing to make for the sake of avoiding a war,
they will expect, tho' without reason, that we
should make the same for the sake of getting
rid of a war ; and this expectation will prevent
their suing for peace, till they are reduced to

the

‘ the last extremity, which is an effect we ought,
‘ if possible, to prevent.

‘ But this, Sir, is far from being the only fa-
‘ tal consequence that may ensue from our call-
‘ ing for the letters and instructions now moved
‘ for. I could mention several others, but shall
‘ confine myself to one. We have, it is true,
‘ the misfortune of being engaged in a war, but
‘ it is, as yet, against *Spain* alone, and while it
‘ continues to be so, we have no great reason to
‘ doubt, or to be afraid of the event; nor are
‘ we under any necessity of seeking allies or af-
‘ sistance in the war. But there are other powers
‘ that are, perhaps, willing to join with *Spain* a-
‘ gainst us, if they could but find a tolerable
‘ excuse for so doing, and, in that case, we may
‘ be under a necessity of endeavouring to get
‘ some of the powers of *Europe* to join with us.
‘ We know how freely ministers of the same
‘ Sovereign correspond with one another, when
‘ there is no jealousy between them, nor any ap-
‘ prehension that the correspondence will be un-
‘ seasonably divulged. This was probably the
‘ case of our ministers at home and abroad,
‘ who were concerned in negotiating and con-
‘ cluding the convention, and therefore there
‘ may be some reflexions or expressions in the
‘ letters or instructions now called for, that may
‘ be of dangerous consequence in both these re-
‘ spects. They may not only be such as will
‘ furnish those that incline to be our enemies,
‘ with a plausible pretence for joining against us,
‘ but they may be such as will render those that
‘ incline to be our friends, less willing to assist
‘ us. These may be the consequences of having
‘ the papers called for laid before so numerous
‘ an assembly; and as these consequences may
‘ be fatal to us in our present situation, I must
‘ therefore give my negative to the motion.’

The

The next that spoke was the Lord *Polwarth*, whose speech was in substance thus.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, I do not remember to have heard it in-
 ‘ fisted on in this, or any former debate, that Lord Pol-
warth's
speech
 ‘ the King of *Spain*'s declaration was an article of
 ‘ the convention, and therefore it was unnecessa-
 ‘ ry for the honourable gentleman who spoke
 ‘ last, to point out to us, so exactly, what was
 ‘ to be deemed, and what was not to be deemed
 ‘ an article of any treaty; but, a declaration or
 ‘ protest may relate to a treaty, tho' it be not
 ‘ signed by both parties, and tho' it be neither
 ‘ made an article, nor mentioned in any article
 ‘ of the treaty; and when such a declaration or
 ‘ protest is signed by one of the contracting par-
 ‘ ties, and solemnly intimated to, and accepted
 ‘ by the other, it has, by the law of nations,
 ‘ the same effect as if it had been made an arti-
 ‘ cle of the treaty.

‘ As for the honourable gentleman's distinc-
 ‘ tion between accepting and receiving, it is,
 ‘ like some of the other ingenious distinctions I
 ‘ have heard come from the same quarter, a lit-
 ‘ tle beyond my comprehension. There may be
 ‘ a difference, but, I protest, it is such a one as
 ‘ I cannot well comprehend; and what is still
 ‘ worse, it is a distinction that, even as he has
 ‘ explained it, will not serve his turn in the pre-
 ‘ sent case. If he should give me any thing,
 ‘ which I do not expect he will, and I should re-
 ‘ ceive it, I should think, that I had not only
 ‘ accepted it, but that I had accepted it upon
 ‘ the conditions on which, I supposed, he gave
 ‘ it; and, I believe, the world would think in
 ‘ the same way. But if he should give me any
 ‘ thing, and at the time of giving should
 ‘ express

‘ exprefs the terms on which he gave it, in fuch
 ‘ a cafe, if I received his prefent without de-
 ‘ claring, that I neither did, nor would receive
 ‘ it upon his terms, the whole world would con-
 ‘ clude, that I had accepted it upon the terms
 ‘ he expreffed. Suppose a man were actually
 ‘ owing me a fum of money, and fhould come
 ‘ and offer me a fum equal to what he owed,
 ‘ but at the fame time fhould declare, that he
 ‘ did not acknowledge himfelf indebted to me
 ‘ in a farthing, nor would give me that money
 ‘ unlefs I received it as a gratuity; and fuppofe
 ‘ I did receive the money without faying a word,
 ‘ ought not my receiving it in that way, to be
 ‘ looked on as my accepting it by way of gra-
 ‘ tuity? I am fure, in point of honour it ought;
 ‘ for no man would receive the money in that
 ‘ way, unlefs he either thought there was no-
 ‘ thing really due to him, or that he had not
 ‘ power to compel the payment of it.

‘ I have made thefe fuppositions, Sir, in or-
 ‘ der to fhew, that he who receives muft always
 ‘ be fuppofed to accept upon the terms on
 ‘ which the thing is, or is fuppofed to be given.
 ‘ And now to apply this to the proteft or de-
 ‘ claration in queftion. If it had been drawn
 ‘ up and figned without the knowledge or parti-
 ‘ cipation of M. Keene, and a copy of it fent to
 ‘ him after the figning of the convention, I fhall
 ‘ grant, that his receiving or accepting it in this
 ‘ manner, would have been of no great mo-
 ‘ ment: He might, in complaifance, have told
 ‘ them, that he would fend a copy of it to his
 ‘ court, or to the *South-Sea* company. But this
 ‘ was far from being the cafe, as appears from
 ‘ the papers already upon our table. Before the
 ‘ convention was figned, there was an agreement
 ‘ between Mr. Keene, and Mr. *La Quadra*, that
 ‘ fuch a declaration fhould be made in writing,
 ‘ and

‘ and signed by the latter, in name of the King
‘ of *Spain*: Nay, farther, before the King of
‘ *Spain*’s ministers would sign the convention,
‘ Mr. *Keene* agreed not only by word of mouth,
‘ but under his hand in writing, that he would
‘ receive or accept of this declaration, and trans-
‘ mit copies of it to his court, and to the *South-*
‘ *Sea* company. Must not we then suppose, that
‘ when he received this paper, he accepted it
‘ upon the terms which were expressed in the
‘ body of it; and that consequently our leaving
‘ our *South-Sea* company to the mercy of the
‘ King of *Spain*, was the condition upon which,
‘ Mr. *Keene* agreed, the signing of the treaty
‘ was to be proceeded on.

‘ I was surprized, Sir, to hear the honourable
‘ gentleman say, that Mr. *Keene*, to shew his
‘ candour, declared upon the spot, that he did
‘ not accept of this declaration as any article or
‘ condition of the treaty, but that he received
‘ it, only in order to transmit a copy of it to his
‘ court, and another to the *South-Sea* company.
‘ I do not know what private information the
‘ honourable gentleman may have about this af-
‘ fair, but the very contrary appears manifest from
‘ the papers now on our table, and from them
‘ only we can judge. (Here he read paragraphs
‘ from several letters, &c.) From these papers
‘ it is, I think, manifest, that Mr. *Keene*, by an
‘ agreement previous to the signing of the con-
‘ vention, agreed to accept of this declaration,
‘ and that he did accept of it without making
‘ any such counter-declaration, either by word
‘ of mouth or in writing; and, by his doing so,
‘ it certainly became a part of the convention:
‘ No civilian will, I am sure, say otherwise. I
‘ say, no civilian, Sir; for I have, this day,
‘ heard some gentlemen of this house say other-
‘ wise; but they do not, I think, pretend to be

‘ civilians ; and therefore, I hope, they will not
‘ pretend to infallibility, or even to great autho-
‘ rity, in a point that depends upon the laws of
‘ nature and nations.

‘ I shall grant, Sir, that matters of a particu-
‘ lar and perplexed nature, are seldom settled by
‘ general treaties. When matters of a general
‘ and national concern are adjusted, those of a
‘ particular or perplexed nature, such as limits,
‘ damages, and the like, are usually referred to
‘ be adjusted by plenipotentiaries, commissaries,
‘ or some such ministers, after the general treaty
‘ has been concluded ; but our late convention
‘ with *Spain* was of an extraordinary kind ; for
‘ all the general rights and pretensions in dispute
‘ between the two nations, such as the freedom
‘ of our trade and navigation in the *American*
‘ seas, our right to cut logwood in the bay of
‘ *Campeachy*, and all such, were left to be regu-
‘ lated by plenipotentiaries ; and that affair which
‘ was the most perplexed, and required the most
‘ particular discussion, I mean the damages suf-
‘ tained by our merchants, was the only affair
‘ that was finally adjusted by the general treaty.
‘ I beg pardon for saying finally adjusted ; for,
‘ in my opinion, it was, on our part, absolutely
‘ given up. I therefore do not at all wonder,
‘ that the great claims our *South-Sea* company
‘ had upon the crown of *Spain*, on account of
‘ seizures, were left to be regulated by plenipo-
‘ tentiaries ; but I was surprized to hear the ho-
‘ nourable gentleman say, that the accounts be-
‘ tween the King of *Spain* and our *South-Sea* com-
‘ pany were all referred to the plenipotentiaries.
‘ No, Sir, the King of *Spain*’s claim upon them
‘ was not referred : We positively and expressly
‘ allowed it, by our minister’s accepting this pro-
‘ test, as the basis of that treaty.

‘ The

‘ The court of *Spain*, Sir, were well appriz’d
‘ of the necessity our negotiators were under, to-
‘ wards the end of last year, for having a treaty
‘ of some kind or other. The ministers of *Spain*
‘ knew, that our ministers had spent 4 or 500,000*l.*
‘ of the nation’s money, in fitting out squadrons
‘ of which they had made no manner of use :
‘ From thence they knew, that our ministers
‘ were under a necessity of having something to
‘ shew, some excuse to make, to Parliament ;
‘ and they would grant them nothing, they
‘ would give us nothing that look’d like a trea-
‘ ty, unless our minister would abandon the
‘ *South-Sea* company : That company must be
‘ intirely left to their mercy : The sum pretend-
‘ ed to be due to them by the company, must
‘ not only be acknowledged, but paid within a
‘ short term, otherwise they were to be left at
‘ liberty to suspend the *Affiento* of negroes ;
‘ whereas, the large sums due by them to the
‘ company, were to be left to a tedious discus-
‘ sion, and not to be paid till their plenipoten-
‘ tiaries should agree to it, which, I am convin-
‘ ced, they never would have done. All this
‘ they insisted on, before they would vouchsafe
‘ to give us any thing that look’d like a treaty ;
‘ and for this, they would not trust to our mini-
‘ ster’s word ; they would have it in writing :
‘ And this form of a protest, which he was to
‘ accept of in a solemn manner, was the method
‘ agreed on ; nay, even for this acceptance they
‘ would not trust to his word : This too they in-
‘ sisted upon having, by way of letter, under
‘ his hand. Does not this shew, that our mini-
‘ sters, so far as they durst venture, were willing
‘ to agree to every thing proposed by the mini-
‘ sters of *Spain* ? Suppose, Sir, the King of *Spain*
‘ has a right to suspend the *Affiento* of negroes,
‘ in case of any failure on our part, yet this can-

‘ not justify Mr. *Keene*’s accepting of that pro-
‘ test in the manner he did: By that acceptance,
‘ he not only acknowledged the right in the King
‘ of *Spain*, but he acknowledged, that the *South-*
‘ *Sea* company would be guilty of a failure on
‘ their part, unless they paid the 68,000*l.* with-
‘ in a short term; and this he did, tho’ he per-
‘ fectly knew, that in justice they owed no such
‘ sum, nor had ever acknowledged, or promised
‘ to pay such a sum, but upon condition of the
‘ King of *Spain*’s settling all accounts with them,
‘ and paying what might appear to be due upon
‘ the balance.

‘ What I have said, Sir, I have spoke from
‘ the papers now upon our table: From them our
‘ negotiations, especially those that relate to his
‘ Catholick Majesty’s protest, must stand con-
‘ demned with every man that peruses them,
‘ and them only. If there be any other papers,
‘ which may justify those negotiations; if the
‘ honourable gentleman knows of any such; if
‘ he knows of any letters, instructions, or o-
‘ ther papers, from whence it may appear, that
‘ Mr. *Keene* declared, when he received this pro-
‘ test, that he did not receive it as any article or
‘ condition of the treaty, that he received it,
‘ only to transmit to his court, and to the *South-*
‘ *Sea* company: I say, if the honourable gentle-
‘ man knows of any such, as, from what he has
‘ said, he would seem to insinuate, I am sure,
‘ he ought, as a friend to Mr. *Keene*, to agree to
‘ their being laid before us. The objection he
‘ has been pleased to make, the dangers he has
‘ been pleased to frighten us with, are, in my
‘ opinion, mere bugbears. The danger of shew-
‘ ing to *Spain* what concessions we were willing
‘ to make for the sake of peace, is an objection
‘ that operated as strongly against laying before
‘ us the letters and instructions to our commissa-
‘ ries,

‘ ries, as it can do against laying before us the
‘ letters and instructions to Mr. *Keene*; and yet,
‘ the former were laid before us without any dif-
‘ ficulty, and without producing any bad effect.
‘ And as no power in *Europe* had the least con-
‘ cern in the negotiations carried on between
‘ *Spain* and us: As no power in *Europe* had any
‘ immediate concern in the disputes between the
‘ two nations, I cannot conceive, what occasion
‘ our ministers could have to mention any other
‘ power in *Europe*, in their letters or instructions
‘ to Mr. *Keene*; and therefore, from their great
‘ wisdom, I must suppose, that no other power
‘ in *Europe* is so much as mentioned in any of
‘ those letters or instructions. For this reason,
‘ if they were all printed and published, as well
‘ as laid before this house, I cannot suppose,
‘ that those who are willing to join with *Spain* a-
‘ gainst us, could, from thence, be furnished
‘ with any pretence for doing so; or that those
‘ who are willing to assist us in the war, in case
‘ we should have occasion for it, could, from
‘ any reflexions or expressions in those letters or
‘ instructions, be rendered less willing than they
‘ are at present to assist us.

‘ This, Sir, is a danger that none of our mi-
‘ nisters have, I am convinced, the least cause to
‘ apprehend: But there is another danger, which
‘ some of them may, perhaps, have cause to ap-
‘ prehend. There may be expressions in some
‘ of those letters or instructions, that might dis-
‘ oblige many here at home, and raise such a
‘ spirit in the nation, as would be of dangerous
‘ consequence to our ministers. If our negotia-
‘ tions were carried on, not so much with a view
‘ to procure satisfaction to the nation, as to pro-
‘ cure temporary expedients for our ministers,
‘ this might appear from some of those letters
‘ or instructions, if they should all be laid be-

‘ fore us ; and this, if there be any such thing,
 ‘ is, I shall grant, a danger which our ministers
 ‘ have great reason to apprehend ; but this is a
 ‘ danger, which, I am sure, ought to have
 ‘ no weight with this house : If it has any, it
 ‘ must be in favour of the motion ; and for this
 ‘ reason, I am the more sanguine for this mo-
 ‘ tion, because I find it opposed by some, who
 ‘ may, perhaps, think themselves exposed to this
 ‘ danger.’

The next, and the last that spoke in this de-
 bate, was Sir *John Hynd Cotton*, whose speech was
 to this effect, *viz.*

Sir John
Hynd Cotton's
 speech.

‘ Mr. Speaker,
 ‘ Sir, I shall not enter into the question, whe-
 ‘ ther our negotiations stand condemned or ac-
 ‘ quitted by the papers now upon our table ; but
 ‘ I must observe, that though several paragraphs
 ‘ have been read, and from thence several objec-
 ‘ tions started, by those who find fault with our
 ‘ negotiations, yet, none of those who declare
 ‘ themselves friends to our negotiations, have at-
 ‘ tempted to read, or to draw an argument from
 ‘ any one of the papers now before us ; from
 ‘ whence it would seem, as if they were consci-
 ‘ ous, that our negotiations cannot be justified
 ‘ from any of the papers we have, as yet, upon
 ‘ our table ; and if they put a negative upon
 ‘ this motion, the whole world will conclude,
 ‘ that they are conscious, those negotiations can
 ‘ as little be justified from any papers that can
 ‘ be laid before us ; therefore, for preventing
 ‘ such an unlucky inference, I hope they will a-
 ‘ gree to the motion.

‘ In this debate, Sir, we have heard Mr. *Keene's*
 ‘ conduct so highly applauded by some gentle-
 ‘ men, and so loudly blamed by others, that, I
 ‘ confess,

‘ confess, it excites a very great curiosity in me,
 ‘ to see all that can be said, both for and against
 ‘ him; and therefore, as I can see no danger
 ‘ from our having all those papers laid before
 ‘ us, if there were no other reason, I should be
 ‘ for the motion. But when I consider the duty
 ‘ we owe to our country, if the gentleman,
 ‘ whose conduct is called in question, be guilty,
 ‘ and the justice we owe to him, if he be inno-
 ‘ cent, I think we ought to have the papers now
 ‘ moved for laid before us, even tho’ it should
 ‘ be attended with all the dangers we have been
 ‘ frightened with; and those who have any re-
 ‘ gard for him, must certainly, I think, be for
 ‘ it, because his character, as a minister, may,
 ‘ perhaps, be justified by some of the papers
 ‘ now called for; and it cannot, I am sure, be
 ‘ rendered worse than it is already in the eyes of
 ‘ many gentlemen of this house, and, I believe,
 ‘ of most men in the nation.’

The question upon this motion was likewise carried in the negative without a division.

Next day *Francis Fane*, Esq; reported from the committee, to whom it was referred to consider further of the supply granted to his Majesty, the following resolution, *viz.* That it is the opinion of this committee, ‘ That the number of effec-
 ‘ tive men to be provided for guards and gari-
 ‘ sons in *Great Britain, Guernsey, and Jersey*, for
 ‘ the year 1740, be (including 2141 invalids,
 ‘ and 815 men, which the regiment consists of
 ‘ for the service of the highlands) 28,852 men,
 ‘ commission and non-commission officers inclu-
 ‘ ded.’ And a motion being made for agreeing with the committee in this resolution, *William Pulteney*, Esq; stood up, and spoke as follows.

Army aug-
 mentation
 voted.

Mr. Pul-
keney's speech
upon that
subject.

Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, I don’t rise up, on this occasion, as I
‘ have often done, to oppose this great number
‘ of land forces, which by the present resolution
‘ are to be raised for the current service of the
‘ year. I am, and ever have been, of opinion,
‘ that when this nation is engag’d in an actual
‘ war with any of its neighbours, and that too
‘ without being supported, or having a prospect
‘ of being supported, by any other power, we
‘ may have occasion to employ land forces. I
‘ shall not at present enter, or propose our enter-
‘ ing, into any enquiry, whence it proceeds that
‘ we stand in this war unsupported and alone;
‘ so as to be oblig’d to employ a number of
‘ land forces, which, if a peace were concluded,
‘ would be more than sufficient for effecting the
‘ most arbitrary purposes. An enquiry of that
‘ kind, Sir, may be proper hereafter; but my
‘ duty to my country, and my zeal for the honour
‘ and safety of his Majesty, dictate to me, that
‘ I ought to concur in every measure for pro-
‘ viding against the present danger.

‘ An army of 33,742 men, in the heart of
‘ this country, under the direction of the go-
‘ vernment, is so dangerous to the liberties of
‘ the people, that nothing but the hopes of
‘ speedy satisfaction for the injuries and insults
‘ of an haughty enemy could prevail upon us to
‘ admit it. Encouraged by this hope, Sir, and
‘ relying on the assurances which his Majesty has
‘ given, that this war shall, in all its branches,
‘ be carried on with a vigour suitable to the jus-
‘ tice of our cause, I agree to this resolution.
‘ But, Sir, the occasion of my standing up now
‘ is to put gentlemen in mind, that, as I do not
‘ oppose our agreement to so great a number of
‘ men, when I think they may be of service to
‘ the nation, and when the present juncture ren-
‘ ders

‘ ders such a number of men expedient, yet my
‘ present assent shall never preclude me from
‘ opposing our keeping up the same, or indeed
‘ a much fewer, number of land forces, when
‘ no such danger threatens, and no such expedi-
‘ ency can be shown.

‘ But the danger that arises to the liberties of
‘ the nation, is not the only inconveniency that
‘ attends a numerous army. We are at present
‘ engag’d in an expensive war, and the people
‘ groan under an almost intolerable burden of
‘ taxes and imposts, in order to defray its ex-
‘ pences, and to discharge some part of an im-
‘ mense national debt. The number of land
‘ forces, Sir, that we now are to keep on foot,
‘ requires, according to the estimates, for their
‘ maintenance, no less a sum than 1,092,390*l*.
‘ This, Sir, is but 107,610*l*. less than what was
‘ thought an extravagant appointment to a King
‘ of this nation for defraying all the expences of
‘ his Family, and all the other charges of his
‘ government, either naval, civil, or military.
‘ Yet that sum, Sir, which was no more than
‘ 1,200,000*l*. when given by a profuse Parlia-
‘ ment to a King, was by the best friends of the
‘ nation thought too much to be intrusted out of
‘ the hands of the people; and their opinion
‘ was justify’d by the event. If the expecta-
‘ tions of the nation, Sir, are answer’d in the
‘ prosecution of this war, there will be employ-
‘ ment enough for a great part of our land
‘ forces in those parts where the enemy is most
‘ sensible, and where we can most easily wound
‘ him. In that case, the service they do the na-
‘ tion will more than over-pay the immediate
‘ expence of keeping them up. And it is with
‘ this view only, that I agree to this resolution;
‘ but if the expectations of the nation are not
‘ answer’d, if our land forces are of no other
‘ use

‘ use than they have been of these twenty years
 ‘ past, which is to be a burden to the people,
 ‘ and to appear once a year upon a review, gen-
 ‘ tlemen, I hope, will not make my concur-
 ‘ rence with this resolution, a reason why I
 ‘ ought not to move for an enquiry into so
 ‘ palpable an abuse of the power and money of
 ‘ the nation.’

William Shippen, Esq; spoke next, as follows.

Mr. Ship-
pen's speech.

‘ Sir, I now stand up to make my anniversary
 ‘ oration against a standing army. I have made
 ‘ one and twenty already, of which fifteen were
 ‘ never seconded, and this will probably be the
 ‘ sixteenth.

‘ The honourable gentleman who spoke last,
 ‘ Sir, and I, are generally of the same senti-
 ‘ ments in questions that come before this house;
 ‘ and what I say now is not with any intention
 ‘ of reflecting upon any part of his speech, for
 ‘ I only disagree with him in his supposing that
 ‘ we can have any occasion for land forces in this
 ‘ war. I know the honourable gentleman's sen-
 ‘ timents and mine are the same with regard to
 ‘ standing armies in general, with this diffe-
 ‘ rence, that he thinks there is a possibility that
 ‘ land forces may be of service to the nation,
 ‘ and I think they can be of service only to the
 ‘ minister.

‘ The war we are now engag'd in, Sir, is, as
 ‘ I take it, a maritime war; and our sea forces
 ‘ alone are proper to carry it on, and end it, to
 ‘ the glory of his Majesty, and the advantage of
 ‘ the nation. It can be render'd a land war only
 ‘ by our being oblig'd to take part with the
 ‘ *Dutch*, if they shall offend *France* by declaring
 ‘ in our favour. But, Sir, I don't see there is
 ‘ the least appearance that our good old allies
 ‘ are

‘ are very much in haste to put us under that
‘ inconveniency ; I don’t see them very rash, ei-
‘ ther in their good offices, or their preparati-
‘ ons. Therefore we may reasonably conclude,
‘ that, for this year at least, we are safe on that
‘ side. What makes me the more confident of
‘ this, Sir, is the delay which the forms of their
‘ government require, before it can take the
‘ least step with regard either to peace or war.
‘ Nobody, I believe, will say that they have
‘ taken any as yet, and every body knows that
‘ before they can, the season for action next year
‘ will be over. For even after the augmenta-
‘ tion of their troops, and refitting of their
‘ navy, that we have heard of late so much of,
‘ shall take place, which can’t be sooner than
‘ the middle of the next year, some time must
‘ be spent before that augmentation is compleat-
‘ ed, or the necessary preparations made. And
‘ we may give them a longer time for delibera-
‘ ting, and settling their scheme of action. By
‘ that time, Sir, no army can take the field,
‘ and we may save all, or the greatest part of
‘ near a million of money, without putting the
‘ nation to the least inconveniency, or exposing
‘ it to the least danger. This, Sir, is a very
‘ large sum, and might, if honestly apply’d to
‘ the service of a maritime war, put an end
‘ to all our differences before the end of next
‘ year.

‘ But gentlemen may say, We have *France* to
‘ deal with: What if we should be invaded?
‘ What if she should attack the *Dutch*? What
‘ if she should raise other disturbances on the
‘ continent? Indeed, Sir, I don’t think that we
‘ have the least to fear from *France*, for this
‘ plain reason, that she gains more by her neu-
‘ trality than is possible she can by taking part
‘ with our enemies. Nay, Sir, I will venture
‘ to

‘ to say, that if she is disposed, which I don’t
‘ at all question, to favour our enemies, she
‘ cannot do either them or herself more effec-
‘ tual service, than by persevering in her neu-
‘ trality. Don’t we see, Sir, she is carrying on
‘ all their trade for them? Don’t we see that
‘ the river is now covered with *French* vessels,
‘ which convey our commodities, that ought to
‘ go in our own bottoms, to *Spain*, and to all
‘ parts of the world? The *Spaniards* can’t sub-
‘ sist without our commodities, and they could
‘ have no way of receiving them, were there
‘ not a neutral power, such as *France* and *Hol-*
‘ *land*, to import them. Besides, Sir, the prime
‘ minister of *France* is growing old; he does
‘ not love war, he can’t bear the very thoughts
‘ of it, and there has not a difference happen’d
‘ in *Europe* these twelve years, that he has not
‘ endeavour’d to make up, if he could not im-
‘ prove it to the interest of his own Master.
‘ Do we not every day hear, Sir, that he is
‘ charitably interposing his good office at the
‘ court of *Great Britain*, to decide the diffe-
‘ rences betwixt us and *Spain*?

‘ As for the great force which they may bring
‘ into the field, and which is the only reason
‘ pretended for our keeping up a land army of
‘ near 40,000 men, besides the 12,000 men
‘ upon the *Irish* establishment, they can never
‘ affect us as long as they stay on the other side
‘ of the water; and if we should suffer them
‘ to land on this side, that will be our fault, un-
‘ less they can bring a superior naval force to fa-
‘ vour their invasion. But we have very lately
‘ heard, Sir, from a very unsuspected authority,
‘ that the *French* are our faithful friends and
‘ well-meaning allies; that as long as we don’t
‘ fall out with them, they will not interrupt us,
‘ and that they have no naval force in readiness
‘ that

‘ that can give us any apprehensions. Then
‘ why should we be uneasy on account of *France*,
‘ since we are so well assur’d that she neither
‘ can nor will hurt us?

‘ As for her falling upon any of our friends
‘ and allies on the continent, I cannot prevail
‘ upon myself to think that it would be our bu-
‘ siness at present to make ourselves a party, if
‘ she should; for our neighbours have not lately
‘ been very liberal of their good offices. But,
‘ Sir, we have not the least reason to apprehend
‘ that she has any such intentions. We have
‘ lately had a proof of her dispositions to peace
‘ in her conduct to the Emperor and the *Turks*,
‘ when the former were so much reduced by a
‘ series of unfortunate campaigns. Had the prime
‘ minister of *France* design’d to have embroil’d
‘ the affairs of *Europe*, he had here a fair op-
‘ portunity, when the affairs of the Emperor,
‘ his old and most formidable enemy, were so
‘ much distressed.

‘ These are some of the reasons why I think
‘ that the expence, to say nothing of the dan-
‘ ger, that must attend our keeping on foot so
‘ great a number of land forces, is very dispro-
‘ portion’d to the service they can do us against
‘ the power which we have the greatest reason
‘ to dread. The only other reason that I can
‘ suggest at present is, that it is possible we
‘ may have occasion to employ them against
‘ *Spain* herself.

‘ To answer this argument, Sir, we are to
‘ consider, that we must employ them either in
‘ an offensive or a defensive war. If in an offen-
‘ sive, it must be by attacking them either in
‘ *Europe* or *America*; if in *Europe*, former expe-
‘ rience has convinced us how ill-grounded all
‘ our hopes of success from such an expedition
‘ must be; besides, I do not see any attempt
‘ that

‘ that could be made, of importance enough to
‘ defray the certain expences the nation must in-
‘ cur, even on a supposition that it should be
‘ successful. If then we should attack our ene-
‘ mies in *America*, where it is our interest to at-
‘ tack them, and where our attacks cannot fail
‘ to succeed, much fewer forces will be sufficient,
‘ and these, Sir, give me leave to say it, ought
‘ to have been sent thither long ago. I believe,
‘ Sir, there is no gentleman, who has made it
‘ his business to inform himself of the present
‘ condition of the *Spaniards* in *America*, who is
‘ not sensible that they are very weak; and that
‘ if we had made a vigorous push there, before
‘ they had had time to have put themselves on
‘ their guard, we might now have congratulated
‘ each other on our success, instead of debating
‘ about the manner of obtaining it. I cannot
‘ say, Sir, what is the condition of the brave
‘ Admiral, who, I hope, is by this time on those
‘ seas; but if he had three or four thousand
‘ land forces to support him, I should have had
‘ a much better opinion both of the success of
‘ this war, and the wisdom of our ministry. It
‘ is by doing such a piece of service to the na-
‘ tion as that would be, that land forces can be
‘ rendered either useful or so much as tolerable
‘ here. That service has not been consulted,
‘ and if it shall, a much fewer number of forces
‘ will be sufficient than this resolution proposes.

‘ The other manner in which we could have
‘ occasion to employ our land forces, and which
‘ I have already mentioned, is, by defending
‘ ourselves. But from whom, Sir? Where is
‘ the enemy who is to attack you? Are the *Spa-
‘ niards* able to do it? No, they are starving at
‘ home; they cannot find subsistence in their
‘ quarters: How then will they be able to vic-
‘ tual, or to equip a fleet and an army for such

‘ an

‘ an expedition? Besides, Sir, where have they
 ‘ ships? Where have they transports for carrying
 ‘ over such a number of men as could give us
 ‘ uneasiness, though then we had not five hun-
 ‘ dred standing forces in the whole nation?

‘ Having thus given my reasons, Sir, why I
 ‘ am for recommitting this resolution, I shall
 ‘ not at all be disappointed if I am singular in
 ‘ my opinion; I am resolved, and I shall always
 ‘ adhere to that resolution, that I will not neg-
 ‘ lect my duty, which is to oppose every burden
 ‘ that may be heavy, or dangerous to the people,
 ‘ but more especially that of a standing army.’

Nothing more being said upon this subject,
 the motion was agreed to without a division.

Wednesday, December 18, Philip Gybbon, Esq;
 stood up, and spoke to the following effect.

‘ Sir, As the necessity and justice of this war
 ‘ require that his Majesty should be well sup-
 ‘ ported, it is highly expedient that the subjects
 ‘ should be encouraged in their endeavours to
 ‘ serve his Majesty by seeing the publick affairs
 ‘ carried on with the concurrence of every mem-
 ‘ ber of this house: I will be bold to say, Sir,
 ‘ that no gentleman, who has the honour to re-
 ‘ present his country, will object to one motion
 ‘ that tends to strengthen his Majesty in the pro-
 ‘ secution of this war. I am sorry not to see
 ‘ that zealous attendance paid by the members
 ‘ of this house, that our present situation de-
 ‘ serves. What may be the cause of this appa-
 ‘ rent neglect, I shall not take upon me to de-
 ‘ termine. Perhaps some gentlemen are afraid
 ‘ of neglecting their private affairs by too intense
 ‘ a concern for the publick, or despair of being
 ‘ able to do any service to their country by their

Mr. Gybbon's speech
 and motion
 for a call.

attendance; but whether the one or the other be the plea, it is evidently insufficient to justify their conduct.

‘ Their absence is the more dangerous, as, I believe, it is no secret all over the nation, that a motion will be soon made in this house, for a bill of the utmost importance to the dignity and independency of the legislature: A motion on which our liberties, and those of our posterity may depend: A motion that will give every gentleman an opportunity of shewing how little any mean, partial views mix with that duty which he owes to his Prince and his country. As I cannot but think the house ought to do its utmost to oblige gentlemen to attend on that important occasion, I therefore take the liberty to move, “ That the house be called over upon *Wednesday* the 16th day of *January* next.”

The motion was opposed by *Edward Thomson*, Esq; in the following manner.

Mr. Thomson's speech.

‘ Sir, I see no reason for forcing those gentlemen, who were so fond last session to leave the house, out of their beloved retirement. Nay, Sir, the experience I had of the calmness, unanimity, and dispatch with which we proceeded in their absence, makes me almost wish that none of them had ever returned. I have a very great regard for the honourable gentleman who made the motion, as he has always done his duty; but I believe the people in general were so sensible both of the unparliamentary step which the seceders took last session, and of the good effects of the laws in favour of trade and navigation, made during their absence, that they will be very well pleased if the house is no fuller than it was when they left

‘ left us. Therefore, I hope you will put the
‘ question.’

The question being put, it was carried, after a
division, in the negative; yeas 82, noes 113.

Tuesday, January 29, Philip Gybbon, Esq; stood Members
summoned
to attend
up and moved, That the serjeant at arms attend-
ing the house, do go with the mace into *West-*
minster-Hall, and the courts there, and into the
Court of Requests, and the places adjacent, and
summon the members there to attend the service
of the house: And the serjeant being returned,
Samuel Sandys, Esq; stood up, and spoke in sub-
stance as follows, viz.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, I am now going to lay before you a pro- Mr. Sandys's speech
and motion
for a place-
bill.
‘ position, which has already been several times
‘ made to you, without meeting with that suc-
‘ cess, which I thought it deserved; but as I
‘ think it a good one, and absolutely necessary
‘ for the preservation of our constitution, I am
‘ far from being discouraged by its former bad
‘ success, nor shall I be discouraged from a future
‘ attempt, even though it should now meet with
‘ as bad a reception as heretofore; because I am
‘ fully convinced of the truth of that observa-
‘ tion, which was long ago made by one of our
‘ best lawyers, That a good bill or motion once
‘ proposed in Parliament, and entered upon our
‘ journals, can never die. It may at first meet
‘ with bad success: It may meet with repeated
‘ bad success; but unless our constitution be ab-
‘ solutely and irrecoverably destroyed, it will by
‘ its own merits at last force its way through the
‘ several branches of our legislature.

‘ The proposition I am to make, Sir, is plain-
‘ ly and in short this, that criminals may not be

‘ allowed to be their own judges, and that our
‘ liberties may not be committed to the keeping
‘ of those, who are retained to destroy them. It
‘ is the duty of Parliament to redress all publick
‘ grievances, and punish all high and heinous
‘ offenders, who have been artful or powerful
‘ enough to evade the laws of the kingdom: It
‘ is the duty of Parliament to grant no more mo-
‘ ney for the publick service, than what is abso-
‘ lutely necessary, and to see that money proper-
‘ ly applied, and duly accounted for: And it is
‘ the duty of Parliament to watch over the liber-
‘ ties and privileges of the people, by taking
‘ care not to pass any laws, that are inconsistent
‘ with the liberties and privileges of the people,
‘ and by providing speedy and effectual remedies
‘ against all incroachments that have been, or
‘ may be made, by ambitious Princes, or guilty
‘ ministers. These, Sir, are among the chief of
‘ the duties of Parliament; but how can we ex-
‘ pect a performance, if a majority of the mem-
‘ bers be such, whose self-preservation or security
‘ depends upon their neglecting, or acting con-
‘ trary to these duties? Can we expect, that pub-
‘ lick grievances will be redressed, if a majority
‘ of Parliament be such as have themselves been,
‘ or such as are the friends and confederates of
‘ those that have been the cause of these pub-
‘ lick grievances? Can we expect, that any high
‘ offender will be punished by Parliament, if
‘ the majority of it be such as have been compa-
‘ nions and sharers with him in his crimes, or
‘ such whose chief subsistence depends upon
‘ screening him from justice? Can we expect,
‘ that any supply demanded by the crown will
‘ be refused, if it is to be granted by those,
‘ whose chief subsistence depends upon making
‘ the grant; or that the publick money will be
‘ properly applied, or duly accounted for, if
‘ those

‘ those that have applied it, or may apply it, to
‘ their own use, are to be the only inspectors of
‘ the publick accounts? Or lastly, Sir, can we
‘ expect, that a Parliament will guard against
‘ the incroachments of an ambitious Prince, or
‘ guilty minister, if the majority of that Parlia-
‘ ment be such as have the whole, or a ne-
‘ cessary part of their subsistence, from the places
‘ or pensions they hold at the arbitrary will of
‘ that ambitious Prince, or guilty minister?

‘ These are questions, Sir, which, in my opi-
‘ nion, can be answered in the affirmative by no
‘ man, that will and dare make use of his rea-
‘ son; and yet every one of these questions
‘ must, I think, be answered in the affirmative
‘ by those who affirm, that our constitution can
‘ never be in any danger from a majority, or
‘ near a majority of this house’s being composed
‘ of such as hold places and pensions at the arbi-
‘ trary will of the crown. I shall grant, Sir,
‘ that it may be necessary for us to have amongst
‘ us some of the chief officers of the crown. It
‘ may be necessary to have always in this house
‘ some of the chief officers of the treasury, ad-
‘ miralty, and army, as well as several others of
‘ those that are employed by his Majesty, as
‘ chief officers, in the executive part of our go-
‘ vernment. These, I say, it may be necessary
‘ to have amongst us, in order to give us such
‘ informations, as may often become necessary in
‘ the several branches of business that come re-
‘ gularly before this house; but, I am sure, it is
‘ no way necessary, and quite inconsistent with
‘ the dignity of this house, to have it filled with
‘ clerks of offices, and inferior officers of our
‘ navy and army. I confess, I have the greatest
‘ regard for such of those as we have at present
‘ amongst us; because, I hope they have all so
‘ much honour, that they would disdain to sacri-

‘ fice their duty, as members of this house, for
 ‘ any selfish consideration; but, we cannot be af-
 ‘ fured, that those who fucceed them in their offi-
 ‘ ces and employments, will be gentlemen of fo
 ‘ much honour; and as they may likewise fucceed
 ‘ them with regard to their feats in this house, our
 ‘ constitution may be thereby brought into the
 ‘ utmoft danger; for, if I were not well affured
 ‘ of the honour of thofe officers we have now
 ‘ amongft us, we have already fuch a number,
 ‘ that I fhould think our constitution upon the
 ‘ brink of deftruction; and, as this number may
 ‘ increafe fo as in a fhort time to become the ma-
 ‘ jority of this house, whilft we have it in our
 ‘ power, we ought to take care to provide againft
 ‘ this danger, by limiting the number of officers
 ‘ that are to have feats in this house; for, if the
 ‘ majority of this house fhould once come to be
 ‘ compofed of officers, and thofe officers fuch as
 ‘ had a greater regard to the places they poffefs,
 ‘ or preferments they hope for, than to the liber-
 ‘ ties and constitution of their country, it would
 ‘ be ridiculous to think of getting the approbation
 ‘ of this house to any fuch regulation. Therefore,
 ‘ Sir, as this is not yet, I hope, our unfortunate
 ‘ cafe, I fhall beg leave to move, “ That leave
 “ may be given to bring in a bill, for the better
 “ fecuring the freedom of Parliaments, by limiting
 “ the number of officers to fit in the house of
 “ Commons.”

This motion was feconded by *Watkin Williams Wynn*, Efq; and occafioned a long debate, in which *John Selwyn*, junior, Efq; fpoke to this effect:

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Selwyn's
 fpeech a-
 gainft it.

‘ Sir, I fhould readily join not only in bringing
 ‘ in but in paffing fuch a bill as the honourable
 ‘ gentleman

‘ gentleman has been pleased to propose, if I
‘ thought it were necessary for the preservation of
‘ our constitution: Nay, I should join with the
‘ honourable gentleman in his motion for bringing
‘ it in, in order to see what sort of remedy he has
‘ a mind to propose, if I thought that the consti-
‘ tution were now, or ever could be in any danger
‘ from the number of officers in this house: Nay
‘ farther, I should probably join with him in this
‘ motion at least, if I were not fully convinced,
‘ that the excluding of any officer, who may have
‘ fortune and interest enough in his country to get
‘ himself chosen, would be a most dangerous in-
‘ fringement of our constitution, and at last an in-
‘ fallible cause of its dissolution.

‘ The honourable gentleman has himself, Sir,
‘ furnished us with what I take to be an unanswer-
‘ able argument against the bill he proposes: He
‘ says, and, indeed, it must by every one be grant-
‘ ed, that no danger can ensue from the number
‘ of officers in this house, unless that number be
‘ so great, as to make a majority, and that even in
‘ this case, no danger can from thence ensue, un-
‘ less that majority consists of such men, as have
‘ a greater regard for the offices they possess, or
‘ the preferments they hope for, than they have
‘ for their own honour, or the liberties of their
‘ country. These, therefore, are two cases, which
‘ we must suppose may happen, before we can say
‘ there is any necessity for such a bill, as he has
‘ been pleased to propose; and these two cases are,
‘ in my opinion, of such a nature, that we cannot
‘ suppose it possible, that either of them should
‘ ever happen, and much less can we suppose,
‘ that both may happen at one and the same time.

‘ We know, Sir, that a great number of those,
‘ who have offices and employments under the
‘ crown, I mean all the officers of the revenue,
‘ are already excluded from having seats in this
‘ house;

‘ house; and as for the officers of our navy and
‘ army, and all those who belong to any of the
‘ offices kept here at *London*, they are, by the very
‘ nature of their office, and by the attendance they
‘ must give, prevented from having any intimacy
‘ or correspondence with the gentlemen or people
‘ of our several counties, cities, or boroughs. and
‘ consequently it must be extremely difficult for
‘ any great number of them to get themselves
‘ chosen; for the people in all places of the king-
‘ dom are fond of those that live amongst them,
‘ and converse with them daily, and will always
‘ chuse one of them, rather than any stranger that
‘ comes to set up as a candidate at an election.

‘ For these reasons, Sir, I think it impossible to
‘ suppose, that ever a majority of this house should
‘ consist of such, as hold offices or employments
‘ at the arbitrary will of the crown; and as for
‘ pensioners, they are already excluded from hav-
‘ ing seats in this house, as effectually as it is pos-
‘ sible for you to exclude them by any law you
‘ can make. But this is not the only impossible
‘ supposition we must make, in order to frighten
‘ ourselves with the dangers we are exposed to by
‘ a great number of officers having seats in this
‘ house: We must not only suppose, that they
‘ make a majority of the house, but that they are
‘ all such as have no regard to their honour, or
‘ their country, which, I hope, will appear to be
‘ a supposition impossible to be made, with regard
‘ to such a number of gentlemen of family and
‘ fortune in this or any other kingdom upon earth;
‘ for gentlemen of family and fortune they must
‘ be, before they can get themselves chosen, un-
‘ less you suppose their constituents to be as great
‘ scoundrels as themselves, which is a supposition
‘ that, I hope, can never be made; at least, I am
‘ sure, if there should ever be ground for making
‘ such a supposition, it would be ridiculous to talk
‘ of

‘ of preserving the liberties of such a vicious and
‘ abandoned people.

‘ But, Sir, before we can suppose our constitu-
‘ tion in danger from a great number of officers
‘ having seats in this house, we must, in my opi-
‘ nion, suppose, that all those officers are not on-
‘ ly regardless of honour and their country, but
‘ downright fools and idiots, with regard to their
‘ own interest. Every gentleman that can have a
‘ seat in this house, must now by law be possessed
‘ of an estate of 600 *l.* or at least 300 *l.* a year, in
‘ his own right. Whilst our constitution is pre-
‘ served, he may call this his property, he may
‘ transmit it to his posterity. But if our happy
‘ constitution should be destroyed: If an absolute
‘ and arbitrary government should be set up, he
‘ could do neither with any certainty. In such
‘ governments there is no property, there is no
‘ man can with certainty depend upon being able
‘ to transmit any thing to his posterity; and
‘ would any man but a fool and a madman render
‘ a certain, real, transmissible estate of 600 *l.* or
‘ 300 *l.* a year precarious, for the sake of a place
‘ or a pension of double the value, which he held
‘ at the mere will of another, and which he knew
‘ he could not transmit to his posterity? This,
‘ Sir, is so contrary to common sense, that it is
‘ impossible to suppose, that any great number of
‘ men in any age, or any country, could be guilty
‘ of such a piece of madness.

‘ From hence, I think, it is evident, that our
‘ constitution can never be in danger from any
‘ number of officers that may have seats in this
‘ house; but if you should by a new law exclude
‘ all those in any office or employment under the
‘ crown, or all but a very few, from having seats
‘ in this house, it would not only endanger, but,
‘ in my opinion, certainly destroy our constitution.
‘ Sir, I believe it will be granted, that since the

happy accession of our present illustrious Family,
as great a regard, as great a respect has been
shewn by the crown to Parliaments, nay greater,
I believe, than was ever shewn in any former
period of time. To compare it with that period
in which our constitution seems to have been
most perfect, and our government most wisely
administred, I mean the reign of the glorious
Queen *Elizabeth*: Every one knows, that she
often treated her Parliaments with more haughti-
ness than has lately been so much as thought of:
Nay, she sometimes treated them in such a man-
ner, as would now be exclaimed against, as the
highest insult, the most dangerous incroachment
upon the rights and liberties of Parliament; and
yet the Parliaments in her time behaved in a
more obedient, I may say, a more servile manner
towards the crown, than they have ever done in
any reign since that time; from whence I must
conclude, that so far from being brought under
any servile influence by the number of officers
we have now in the house, it contributes towards
enhancing that regard, which the crown finds
necessary to shew to us; and, I think, very good
reason it should; for surely a gentleman who,
besides his seat in this house, and his personal a-
bilities, has a great share in the government and
publick counsels of his country, or a great com-
mand and interest in the navies and armies of
his country, is more to be regarded than a mere
country esquire or city merchant, who has no-
thing to recommend him, but his own personal
abilities, and his being a member of this house.

Therefore, Sir, if you exclude all officers of
the crown from having seats in this house, you
will, of one side, lessen that regard which the
crown now finds necessary to shew to you, and
of the other, you will introduce, and in a man-
ner establish faction and sedition, not only in this
house,

‘ house, but in every part of the kingdom. The
‘ chief guard we have against faction and sedition
‘ has always consisted in those honours, posts, and
‘ preferments, which the crown has the sole power
‘ to bestow: If you remove that guard out of
‘ Parliament, the seditious great men, who may
‘ be the heads of faction, may probably, in a short
‘ time, get the direction not only of this house,
‘ but of most of the elections in the kingdom;
‘ the consequence of which would certainly be a
‘ civil war between this house and its followers of
‘ one side, and the King and his officers and their
‘ followers, of the other; and by the issue of this
‘ war, let which ever side prevail, our constitution
‘ would certainly be undone. This, Sir, was the
‘ case in the reign of *Henry III*. This was the case
‘ in the reign of *Charles I*. In *Henry III*d’s time,
‘ the great Earl of *Leicester*, who was head of the
‘ party against the King and his ministers or offi-
‘ cers, not only got the direction of the Parlia-
‘ ment, but, by his own authority nominated ma-
‘ ny of those that were to be chosen as members
‘ of this house; and if that haughty Earl had not
‘ been deserted by the Duke of *Gloucester*, and
‘ defeated by the courage and conduct of the
‘ Prince of *Wales*, afterwards our great *Edward I*.
‘ that contest would probably have ended in a to-
‘ tal overthrow of our constitution, as the other I
‘ have mentioned did, in the reign of *Charles I*.

‘ From all which, Sir, I must conclude, that
‘ the offices or employments, which are or may be
‘ possessed by members of this house, may serve
‘ to keep up such a correspondence and connexion
‘ between the crown and Parliament, as will secure
‘ the tranquillity of the nation against faction and
‘ sedition, but can never enable any Prince or mi-
‘ nister to destroy our liberties; because as soon as
‘ any such design becomes manifest, most of the
‘ officers, who have the honour to be members of
‘ this

‘ this house, will declare, and thereby turn the
 ‘ majority of this house against the court; and by
 ‘ that means we shall always have it in our power
 ‘ to give a check to the wicked designs of any
 ‘ ambitious Prince or guilty minister. There can,
 ‘ therefore, be no necessity for such a bill, as the
 ‘ honourable gentleman has been pleased to pro-
 ‘ pose; but on the contrary, I must think, it
 ‘ would be of the most dangerous consequence to
 ‘ our constitution, and for this reason I must de-
 ‘ clare against his motion.’

The next that spoke was *George Lyttleton, Esq;*
 the purport of whose speech was as follows, *viz.*

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Lyttle-
 son's speech.

‘ Sir, An honourable gentleman at the lower
 ‘ end of the house, threw out a proposal, to send
 ‘ us all to school again for the reforming our man-
 ‘ ners. Sir, I think, our care should be to prevent
 ‘ members of Parliament from being at school,
 ‘ when they are here, from being under the lash
 ‘ of an insolent minister, as, if we may credit his-
 ‘ tory, has happened in some former Parliaments.
 ‘ Sir, I do not mean the Parliament in Queen *Eli-
 ‘ zabeth's* reign, however servile they are repre-
 ‘ sented to have been, by an honourable member
 ‘ over the way. I am afraid the practice of mi-
 ‘ nisters naming members to boroughs at their own
 ‘ will and pleasure, which he told us was used by
 ‘ the Earl of *Leicester*, has not been dropt since
 ‘ that time, and I wish our posterity may never
 ‘ see days less advantageous to liberty. *Elizabeth*
 ‘ loved her people, desired their honour, regarded
 ‘ their interest, she heard their complaints against
 ‘ the greatest, the most favoured of her ministers;
 ‘ and yet I will own, Sir, there were many wrong
 ‘ things done in her reign, because sufficient re-
 ‘ straints were not then laid upon the power of the
 ‘ crown;

‘ crown: And therefore the example of her reign
‘ holds out a useful lesson to us, that even to the
‘ best of Princes we should not allow such a dan-
‘ gerous influence, as may tempt them, by the
‘ advice of bad ministers, to encroach on our free-
‘ dom.

‘ Sir, considering how this bill comes recom-
‘ mended, I should have imagined, gentlemen
‘ would have thought it owing to themselves, if
‘ not to their country, to seem to treat it with a
‘ little respect. But not so much as to allow it to
‘ be brought into the house, to oppose the princi-
‘ ple of it, is indeed very extraordinary. There
‘ have been times, when only for the sake of that
‘ principle, bills of a much less moderate nature,
‘ and to which there lay many objections that can-
‘ not be made against this, have past here without
‘ opposition. Sir, for my own part, I think,
‘ when I am promoting this bill, that I am con-
‘ tending for all I ever thought myself bound to
‘ contend for, that I am opposing all I ever
‘ thought it my duty to oppose: All faults and
‘ mismanagements in the administration of govern-
‘ ment, the misunderstanding, the neglect, the
‘ giving up of all national interests, discontent at
‘ home, dishonour abroad, whatever can be con-
‘ ceived most detrimental to the good of the pub-
‘ lick, is all so closely inwoven with the evil this
‘ bill would prevent, that it can be guarded a-
‘ gainst, or remedied by no other possible means.
‘ Sir, how far I am from supposing, that merely
‘ to have an employment, without other cause of
‘ suspicion, implies any notion of guilt or corrup-
‘ tion, I need no other proof than the sense I must
‘ have of my own situation. But though I have
‘ an employment myself, I think it still undeniably
‘ true, that the nation has reason to be jealous of
‘ the number of placemen in Parliament; because
‘ nations always regard things, and not persons;
‘ because

‘ because they consider the temptation in general,
‘ not a particular power of resisting it; and because
‘ the publick wisdom ought to proportion the de-
‘ gree of restraint to the degree of danger, that is
‘ either felt or foreseen.

‘ While this house is full of independent gentle-
‘ men, or with such placemen only whose places
‘ are not so much the best of their property, that
‘ they cannot risk the loss of them without a spirit
‘ of martyrdom, who have something of their
‘ own sufficient to out-weigh their employments,
‘ and while the number even of these shall be con-
‘ fined within some moderate bounds, a minister
‘ must regard this assembly as an awful tribunal,
‘ before which he is constantly to account for his
‘ conduct: He must respect your judgments, he
‘ must dread your censures, he must feel your
‘ superintendency. But I can imagine a future
‘ house of Commons so crowded with placemen,
‘ that a spectator in the gallery might be apt to
‘ mistake, and think himself at the levy of a mi-
‘ nister instead of a Parliament. The benches here
‘ may be covered not only with officers of rank in
‘ the government, not only with the servants of
‘ the crown, but with the servants, perhaps, of
‘ those servants; and what sentiments, Sir, have
‘ we reason to think the sight of a house so filled
‘ would excite in a minister? Would he think
‘ himself in the presence of his country, or in the
‘ midst of a guard that would enable him to defy
‘ its justice, and deride its resentment? The possi-
‘ bility of this happening hereafter, is the ground
‘ of this bill, which therefore the people of *Eng-*
‘ *land* do not only consider as a single point to be
‘ gained for them upon any present necessity, but
‘ as a general security against all they apprehend
‘ for the future.

‘ Sir, my worthy friend who made you this
‘ motion, in the opening of it, explained to you
‘ sufficiently,

‘ sufficiently, that there is no intent of running
‘ into any extreams. If I thought there was, I
‘ would oppose it as much as any man here. I
‘ know but one thing more preposterous than such
‘ a general place-bill, as would exclude all persons
‘ in office from a seat in this house, and that is to
‘ leave the number of them under no limitation at
‘ all. But for fear of starving, must we die of a
‘ surfeit? Between these two absurdities, can no
‘ medium be found? Can’t we continue those
‘ among us who are of any use to the house,
‘ who can give any assistance, any weight, any
‘ facility, any grace to our proceedings, and shut
‘ the door against others, whom it is neither decent
‘ nor safe to admit? Sir, the doing this is easy; it
‘ will be done by this bill; it is what the wisdom
‘ of former Parliaments would have done long be-
‘ fore now. But the reason they did it not was,
‘ it never entered into their thoughts to conceive
‘ that some, who have since sat in Parliament,
‘ could attempt to come there; I do not mean
‘ from any personal incapacity, but from the na-
‘ ture itself of their offices, incompatible almost
‘ with the very idea of a member of Parliament.
‘ It is a surprizing thing, but it is verified by what
‘ we see every day, that the common practice of
‘ some ages goes beyond even the fears of the past.
‘ We must therefore supply from experience what
‘ our predecessors fail’d to foresee; and we are
‘ called upon to do so by the unanimous cry of
‘ the nation. Sir, the greatest affairs before us are
‘ of less importance than this: It is better *Spain*
‘ should invade the freedom of the *American* seas,
‘ than the crown of *England* violate the indepen-
‘ dence of Parliament. It is not *Spanish* or *French*
‘ arms, but *Spanish* and *French* maxims of govern-
‘ ment, that we should have most to fear from, if
‘ the vigilant caution, the jealous spirit of liberty
‘ in this house did not concur with the goodness,
‘ the

‘ the natural goodness of his Majesty, to secure
‘ our free constitution. Let the *Cortez* of *Spain*,
‘ let the Parliament of *Paris* be a warning to this;
‘ let them shew us what we may come to, if we
‘ don’t prevent the growth of corruption, before
‘ it produces here the insensible, gradual, fatal
‘ change it did there.

‘ Sir, I am trying to recollect what objections
‘ have been made to this bill, and I protest I can
‘ find none that seem to me to want a reply. One
‘ chiefly insisted upon is, That it carries an air of
‘ suspicion. Sir, in all the states I have read of,
‘ ancient and modern, the most suspicious people
‘ have been always the latest enslaved. To suspect
‘ human frailty in tempting circumstances is a very
‘ natural jealousy, and too secure a confidence will
‘ hardly be thought a parliamentary virtue. It is
‘ painful, indeed, to be suspected, but the greater
‘ the pain, the greater the desire should be to re-
‘ move that suspicion. But, Sir, against the pre-
‘ sent house of Commons, no such suspicion can
‘ be conceived.—Upon what grounds should it be
‘ founded, upon what probability? Has the pri-
‘ vate discourse of gentlemen here, ever been dif-
‘ ferent from their publick behaviour? Have they
‘ ever talk’d one way, and voted another? Have
‘ there been any indications of a private interest,
‘ *that* of any *one man* ever prevailing over *that* of
‘ the nation, against fact, reason, or justice? Have
‘ not the majority here constantly shewn the
‘ strongest conviction, that their conduct was
‘ strictly conformable to the most disinterested love
‘ of their country? Such a house of Commons
‘ ought not to be, is not suspected: But granting
‘ such a doubt to have been formed, is this the
‘ way to remove it? Will the rejecting this bill
‘ clear our character, or can all the art and power
‘ of calumny give half the weight to an imputation
‘ of that kind as such a proceeding?

‘ Sir,

‘ Sir, to those who treat this bill as a chime-
‘ rical thing, an idle speculative project, I will
‘ say but one word, that the most chimerical
‘ thing in nature, is the notion of a free consti-
‘ tution, where the restraining powers are not
‘ entirely exempt from dependency. Such li-
‘ berty is, indeed, a speculation fit for school-
‘ boys alone; for what would terms and appear-
‘ ances avail, if independency were lost? You
‘ might retain, indeed, the vain ensigns of your
‘ former authority, but would they give you
‘ any dignity, wou’d they be of any use to the
‘ publick? The mace there upon your table,
‘ what would it signify? It might be borne be-
‘ fore you with ridiculous pomp, but it would
‘ be what *Cromwell* call’d it once, a mere bau-
‘ ble; or if it had any weight, it would be only
‘ to oppress, not to protect.

‘ Sir, the present form of our government,
‘ keep it but free from corruption, is so wisely
‘ constituted, the powers in it are so happily
‘ mix’d, that it has all the advantages of a re-
‘ publick, without the defects and evils attend-
‘ ing one. But, on the other side, I must say,
‘ that if it should be corrupted, if the controul
‘ of Parliament should be bought off by the
‘ crown, the very reverse would be true; and it
‘ would have all the defects, all the evils of an
‘ absolute monarchy, without the advantages;
‘ it would be a more expensive, and worse ad-
‘ ministred absolute power. Sir, I hope it is
‘ understood, that in what I have said, I am
‘ only contending for a provisional security a-
‘ gainst a mischief not yet felt in all its malig-
‘ nity, but yet, of so increasing a nature, and
‘ such ruinous consequences, that we must be
‘ blind not to foresee them, and worse than care-
‘ less not to prevent. I will only add, that
‘ every year we delay this security, may proba-
‘ bly

‘ bly add both to the necessity and difficulty of
 ‘ obtaining it; and that people out a-doors may
 ‘ be apt to judge from the success of this ques-
 ‘ tion to-day, if even now, it does not come a
 ‘ little too late.’

Sir *William Yonge* stood up, and spoke in substance as follows, *viz.*

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Sir *William*
Yonge's
speech.

‘ Sir, I am very ready to allow, that it is lau-
 ‘ dable in a free people to be jealous of their li-
 ‘ berties; and to be ready to repel the least at-
 ‘ tack that can be made upon them. But I can-
 ‘ not think it very prudent to shew any outward
 ‘ signs of this jealousy, without some real and
 ‘ immediate cause; and when divisions and ani-
 ‘ mosities are stirred up amongst a free people,
 ‘ about guarding against an attack that was ne-
 ‘ ver made nor thought of, I shall always be in-
 ‘ clined to impute it to any thing, rather than
 ‘ to a true and disinterested regard for the pub-
 ‘ lick good. All contests about altering or a-
 ‘ mending our constitution, especially when they
 ‘ are nursed up, and carried on without doors,
 ‘ as well as within, I must look on as a political
 ‘ sort of warfare; and, I think, no sort of war
 ‘ ought ever to be begun, without some real of-
 ‘ fence of one side or other. If the nation is to
 ‘ be set in a ferment, about providing against
 ‘ every imaginary danger that may be suggested
 ‘ by a melancholy and gloomy disposition, we
 ‘ shall always be so much taken up with provi-
 ‘ ding against imaginary and distant domestick
 ‘ dangers, that we may probably, some time or
 ‘ other, overlook, and neglect to provide against
 ‘ a real and imminent foreign danger; and thus,
 ‘ whilst we are engaged in needless contests a-
 ‘ bout guarding our liberties and properties a-
 ‘ gainst

‘ gainst the invasions of one another, we may at
‘ last find both left entirely at the mercy of
‘ some foreign invader.

‘ For this reason, I am not for endeavouring
‘ to be so quick-sighted as some gentlemen pre-
‘ tend to be, nor shall I ever be for making an
‘ alteration in our constitution, in order to pro-
‘ vide against any danger it may be exposed to,
‘ till that danger begins to be in some degree
‘ felt, as well as foreseen; and therefore, I
‘ think, no gentleman can expect, that I should
‘ agree to the motion now under our considera-
‘ tion. Whatever may be our fate in future
‘ times, I am sure, it cannot be said, that in his
‘ present Majesty’s reign, or under the present
‘ administration, the least attempt has been made
‘ upon the freedom of Parliament, or to gain a
‘ corrupt influence over any member of this
‘ house. If our Parliaments had ever once of
‘ late years, at the instigation of the crown, a-
‘ greed to, or approved of any thing that look’d
‘ like an incroachment, either upon the rights
‘ and liberties of the people, or upon the pro-
‘ perty of any private man in the kingdom,
‘ that agreement or approbation might have
‘ been suspected of proceeding from some cor-
‘ rupt influence. But as no such agreement or
‘ approbation has ever been obtained, as no at-
‘ tempt has been lately made by the crown to
‘ obtain any such, I can see no reason for the
‘ present motion, or for that outcry against cor-
‘ ruption, that has been of late so industriously
‘ propagated all over the nation.

‘ Corruption, I know, Sir, like arbitrary
‘ power and wooden shoes, is a most hideous
‘ word, and I shall grant, that it may be of
‘ dangerous consequence to the liberties of a free
‘ people; but there are two things that must
‘ concur, before it can ever become dangerous,

‘ and that is, a general depravity of manners
‘ among the people, and a wicked design in
‘ those that govern them. If virtue prevails a-
‘ mong the generality of the people, if they are
‘ not generally guided by selfish and corrupt
‘ motives, an ambitious court can never propose
‘ to succeed in their designs, by means of cor-
‘ ruption, let their fund for that purpose be ne-
‘ ver so extensive; and if the governors of a
‘ free people have no ambitious or wicked de-
‘ signs, no fund for corruption can ever be dan-
‘ gerous in their hands; but, on the contrary,
‘ it may be necessary for preserving the happi-
‘ ness and tranquillity of the people; for if the
‘ people are generally corrupt, if they be gene-
‘ rally guided by selfish and corrupt motives,
‘ their governors must have wherewithal to sa-
‘ tisfy those views, which with most men, are
‘ their only motives for action, otherwise it will
‘ be impossible to get a majority of the people
‘ to concur, even in those measures that are ab-
‘ solutely necessary for their own preservation.

‘ It is therefore evident, Sir, that those who
‘ think we are in any present danger from cor-
‘ ruption, must be of opinion, that a general
‘ depravity of manners has of late crept in a-
‘ mong the people of this kingdom, and that
‘ his Majesty, by the advice of evil counsellors,
‘ has formed designs against the liberties of his
‘ people; which is an opinion, that, I hope, is
‘ far from being entertained by any gentleman
‘ in this house. Whatever opinion we may have
‘ of the generality of our countrymen, I hope
‘ no gentleman thinks, that his Majesty has any
‘ designs against the liberties of his people, or
‘ that he would harbour any such, were it in his
‘ power to carry them into execution. What
‘ are we then to do by the bill proposed? If a
‘ general depravity of manners does not prevail,
‘ we

‘ we are, without the least shadow of reason, to
‘ deprive the people of the service of those,
‘ who, if they are honest, are certainly best able
‘ to serve their country in Parliament; and if a
‘ general depravity of manners does prevail, we
‘ are to deprive his Majesty, who, we are cer-
‘ tain, can have no bad designs, of the only
‘ means he can have for carrying his good de-
‘ signs into execution, or, indeed, for answering
‘ any one end of government.

‘ But now, Sir, let me suppose, which, I am
‘ sure, there is no ground for, that a majority of
‘ this house not only think, that the people of
‘ this nation are generally governed by selfish
‘ and corrupt motives, but also, that his Ma-
‘ jesty has, by the advice of evil counsellors,
‘ formed designs against the liberties of the peo-
‘ ple: Even in this case, can we suppose that
‘ this bill would be a proper remedy? From ex-
‘ perience we must conclude, that it would have
‘ a quite contrary effect: Like the self-denying
‘ ordinance in *Cromwell’s* time, it would not
‘ only facilitate, but hasten that very conse-
‘ quence it is intended to prevent. The passing
‘ of such a bill, would be an immediate and in-
‘ fallible cause of a division and contention be-
‘ tween the King and his Parliament, which
‘ would of course drive both to extremes; and
‘ as we have supposed both sides governed by
‘ ambitious and selfish views only, whichever
‘ side prevailed, the contention would end, as it
‘ did in *Cromwell’s* time, in the establishment of
‘ arbitrary power. Therefore, if there were any
‘ present danger from corruption, the only me-
‘ thod for providing effectually against it would
‘ be, to take proper measures for restoring the
‘ virtue of the people, and for removing evil
‘ counsellors from the King, both which may be
‘ done by Parliament, but can never be done by

‘ such a bill as is now proposed ; and therefore,
 ‘ I must be against giving leave to bring in a
 ‘ bill, which, I think, can in no case be of any
 ‘ service, and which may, probably, be at-
 ‘ tended with most pernicious consequences.’

The next that spoke in this debate was *Edward Southwell*, Esq; the purport of whose speech was as follows, *viz.*

Mr. South-
 well's speech.

‘ Mr. Speaker,
 ‘ Sir, The bill now moved for, is of so great
 ‘ consequence, so ardently desired by the nation in
 ‘ general, that I cannot satisfy myself with giv-
 ‘ ing a bare assent to the motion for bringing it
 ‘ in, and therefore, I must venture upon the
 ‘ hard task of betraying my own inability, ra-
 ‘ ther than sit silent in a debate, whereon, I
 ‘ think, the freedom and independency of Par-
 ‘ liament, and the very being of our constitu-
 ‘ tion depend. A debate, Sir, which, by its
 ‘ event, must, in effect, determine, whether the
 ‘ Commons of *Great Britain* are ever hereafter
 ‘ to be properly represented in this house, whe-
 ‘ ther we are really to be any longer a free peo-
 ‘ ple or no.

‘ It would ill become me, Sir, to dare to in-
 ‘ sinuate the least reflexion upon any of those
 ‘ gentlemen who have the honour to be em-
 ‘ ployed in his Majesty's service, or to be dis-
 ‘ tinguished by his Royal Favour. Their rank
 ‘ and their station claim a due respect, and I
 ‘ have ever paid them such as becomes a free-
 ‘ man. As gentlemen, and as individuals, I
 ‘ have a great regard for them ; but as legisla-
 ‘ tors, and as an aggregate body, I must own,
 ‘ their numbers, their power, and their influ-
 ‘ ence here, may give just grounds of jealousy
 ‘ and apprehension, to every man that under-
 ‘ stands

‘ stands the nature, and admires the wisdom of
‘ our happy constitution ; especially if we should
‘ ever happen to see an union, or coalition of
‘ their several interests, for their mutual support,
‘ and, as it were, in one common cause, when-
‘ ever the state of our army, or navy, of our
‘ treasury, or revenue, or of the nation in gene-
‘ ral, shall come under the consideration of this
‘ house.

‘ We justly value ourselves on the wisdom and
‘ equity of our laws, for trying the life, liberty,
‘ and property of the meanest subject, by im-
‘ partial judges, and disinterested juries. Shall
‘ we be thus careful of the liberties and proper-
‘ ties of private men, and take no care of the
‘ liberties and properties of the people in gene-
‘ ral ? Shall we remove a juror, in a case of pri-
‘ vate property, if it appears that he has an in-
‘ terest in either side of the question ; and in a
‘ case of publick property, shall we admit a ma-
‘ jority, or near a majority of those that are to
‘ be judges, to consist of such as have the whole,
‘ or the greatest part of their subsistence, de-
‘ pending upon one side, perhaps the wrong side,
‘ of the question ? Surely, Sir, this great coun-
‘ cil, which is entrusted with the happiness, the
‘ property, and purse of the nation, demands, at
‘ least, equal care and attention : The guardians
‘ of the laws, liberties, and publick interest,
‘ ought, above all men, to be disinterested and
‘ independent ; free not only from the imputa-
‘ tion, but even from the least suspicion of any
‘ pecuniary bias whatever. In private life, it
‘ would be absurd to allow any man to sit as
‘ judge and jury in his own cause ; and in this
‘ house, where our all is at stake, is it not equal-
‘ ly absurd, may it not be destructive ?

‘ Sir, there is no design to turn out of this
‘ house, every gentleman that has a place or

‘ office under the crown. By the bill now moved
 ‘ for, all those who have places or offices under
 ‘ the crown, are to be excluded from having
 ‘ seats in this house, except such placemen and
 ‘ officers as shall be named in the bill; and when
 ‘ this exception comes to be filled up, it will ap-
 ‘ pear, that there may still be at least a hundred
 ‘ and fifty placemen and officers in this house,
 ‘ which surely is a number sufficient for answer-
 ‘ ing all the good purposes of the crown; and,
 ‘ I hope, no gentleman will say, we ought to
 ‘ have such a number of placemen and officers in
 ‘ this house, as may answer those bad purposes
 ‘ which some future ambitious King, or bad mi-
 ‘ nister, may happen to have in view, or may be
 ‘ prompted to have in view, when he considers,
 ‘ that he has such a great number of placemen
 ‘ and officers in this house.

‘ The long and expensive wars this nation has
 ‘ been obliged to carry on, for the just defence
 ‘ of our religion, our laws, and our liberties,
 ‘ have engaged us in immense debts: These
 ‘ debts still subsist, and have had this fatal con-
 ‘ sequence, that while they have settled the ba-
 ‘ lance of power abroad, I fear they have over-
 ‘ turned the balance of power at home. They
 ‘ have raised a numerous swarm of revenue and
 ‘ excise officers, and other tax-gatherers, who
 ‘ have overspread the nation like locusts. It is
 ‘ well known what influence these officers and
 ‘ tax-gatherers have upon elections; and I may
 ‘ also say, it is well known, what use they make
 ‘ of it. They influence our elections, not only
 ‘ while they live, but also when they die; for
 ‘ many electors are influenced by the hopes of
 ‘ succeeding them.

‘ We are again engaged in a just and necessary
 ‘ war, whereby our fleets are become more nu-
 ‘ merous, our land forces greatly increased, and

‘ more and more levies of marines every day
‘ made. These augmentations must throw a
‘ new weight of power into that scale, which
‘ seems already to be charged beyond its due
‘ proportion, and of course the freedom of Par-
‘ liament, and the security of our constitution,
‘ will be thereby more endangered, which has
‘ raised great jealousies all over the nation.

‘ This bill, Sir, seems to be the only sure me-
‘ thod to allay these jealousies, and to prevent
‘ these dangers. It is not meant to exclude all
‘ placemen from Parliament: It is meant only to
‘ restrain and limit the number of placemen,
‘ which in future Parliaments may become so
‘ great, as to be inconsistent with the freedom
‘ of Parliament, or the preservation of our con-
‘ stitution. This effect the bill will have, if,
‘ luckily for us and our posterity, it be passed
‘ into a law; but this is not the only good effect
‘ it will have. Besides this, it will have many
‘ other good effects: It will not only limit the
‘ number of placemen in Parliament; but it will
‘ also soon lessen their number, and their ex-
‘ pence in general. If this bill should be passed,
‘ new places would not be created, many old
‘ ones would be abolished, no more officers would
‘ be employed than were absolutely necessary;
‘ and, I verily believe, no more would be al-
‘ lowed them than they strictly earned: A small
‘ salary would then satisfy a clerk in an office,
‘ who might now, perhaps, reject it, as a mem-
‘ ber of this house; and men might well afford
‘ to serve for half pay, who had no interest to
‘ support, and no other merit necessary for the
‘ post they enjoy, or the post they aspire to,
‘ than the bare qualification for that, and that
‘ alone. They would then become men of one
‘ calling, and of one business: They would be
‘ more diligent and faithful in the discharge of
‘ their

‘ their duty, because they would be more afraid
 ‘ of being called to account.

‘ The nation, Sir, grows daily more jealous
 ‘ of its liberties, and more zealous for the secu-
 ‘ rity of them, by the success of this bill; and,
 ‘ therefore, I hope that, at least, so much defe-
 ‘ rence will be paid to the voice of the people,
 ‘ as to admit their representatives fully to debate
 ‘ the merits of this important cause. The voice
 ‘ of the people is well worthy the attention, the
 ‘ serious attention of a wise legislature: It is a
 ‘ voice that first or last will be heard, and will
 ‘ have its effect: It is a voice that is not to be
 ‘ silenced, that is not to be smothered, much
 ‘ less to be rejected with contempt.

‘ Therefore, Sir, in duty to his Majesty, that
 ‘ he may reign happy in the hearts, in the affec-
 ‘ tions, and confidence of his people, which a-
 ‘ lone can render him powerful at home, and
 ‘ formidable abroad; in justice to my country,
 ‘ that these valuable rights and privileges, deri-
 ‘ ved to us from our ancestors, may be transmit-
 ‘ ted down to posterity; in discharge of my own
 ‘ conscience, and of the great trust reposed in
 ‘ me by my constituents, I thought myself obli-
 ‘ ged, notwithstanding the just sense I have of
 ‘ my inability, to give this publick testimony of
 ‘ my approbation of what is proposed, and I do
 ‘ most heartily join in the motion, for bringing
 ‘ in this important and most necessary bill.’

The next speech we shall give, was that
 made by *Henry Pelham, Esq;* which was to this
 effect, *viz.*

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Pel-
ham's speech.

‘ Sir, The honourable gentlemen, who in this
 ‘ debate have spoke in favour of the motion,
 ‘ seem all, by their arguments, to presume, that
 ‘ every

every gentleman, who has a place or office under the crown, is to receive directions from the crown, with regard to his behaviour in this house, and that he will always vote and act here according to these directions. Sir, if there were any ground for such a presumption, if I thought that there could ever be any ground for such a presumption, I should most readily agree to this motion: I should not only be for excluding all such gentlemen from having seats in this house, but I should be for laying them under all the incapacities, which excise-officers are already by law subjected to. I should be for preventing their endeavouring to persuade any elector to give, or to dissuade any from giving his vote for any candidate at an election. But I am very far from supposing, that the crown, or any minister of the crown, will ever attempt to give directions to any member of this house, with regard to his behaviour here; and much less can I suppose, that any gentleman, who has the honour to be chosen a member of this house, would submit to follow such directions, for the sake of any place or office he can have or expect from the crown. When a gentleman is chosen a member of this house, he thereby becomes a counsellor for his Sovereign, as well as a trustee for the people; and in both these respects, he is in honour bound to give his opinion freely and sincerely upon every question that occurs. A place or office under the crown may prevent his associating himself with those that appear to be disaffected or discontented, or it may engage his assent in things that appear to be indifferent, or of no great moment; but it can never engage his approbation of any measure that appears to be inconsistent with the liberties of the people, and consequently, with the

‘ security of the crown; for these two have now
‘ such a mutual dependance, that no attempt can
‘ be made upon either, without at the same time
‘ weakening the other.

‘ For this reason, Sir, I should think our liber-
‘ ties and constitution in no danger, even though
‘ a majority of this house consisted of such as held
‘ places and offices under the crown, provided
‘ they were regularly and fairly chosen, which
‘ they could not be, unless they were gentlemen
‘ of good characters, of good fortunes, and of a
‘ good family-interest in their country: With such
‘ a Parliament, if the crown should begin to form
‘ any arbitrary designs, some few of this majority
‘ might, perhaps, be brought over, by the hopes
‘ of great preferment, or by the fears of losing
‘ what they possessed; but the greatest part of
‘ them would certainly join the party against the
‘ court, for this very good reason, because it would
‘ be the most certain way of preserving not only
‘ their own fortunes, but also the places and offices
‘ they enjoyed. If they should join with the court
‘ in giving a parliamentary sanction to such de-
‘ signs, and establishing an arbitrary power in the
‘ crown, they would not only render their own
‘ private fortunes precarious, but they would put
‘ it in the power of the crown to turn them out of
‘ the places and offices they possess without any
‘ danger; and this would, probably, be the con-
‘ sequence; for the lowest and most upstart fellows
‘ are generally the best servants, and most humble
‘ slaves to the haughty prime minister of an abso-
‘ lute Sovereign. This, I say, would be the case,
‘ with regard even to those placemen of family
‘ and fortune, who had concurred in the establish-
‘ ment of arbitrary power: They would be all
‘ turned out, and more humble slaves, or at least,
‘ slaves to whom the crown and its ministers did
‘ not owe such obligations, would be put into their
‘ room,

‘ room, as soon as it could be done without danger
‘ of overturning that lofty fabrick of power, which
‘ by their assistance had been erected.

‘ This, Sir, would be the certain fate of all
‘ gentlemen of character, family, and fortune in
‘ their country, if they should, for the sake of
‘ preserving their posts or offices, join with the
‘ slaves of a court in giving a parliamentary sanc-
‘ tion to, and thereby establishing an arbitrary
‘ power. On the other hand, if most of them
‘ should declare against the court, as, I believe,
‘ would be the case, they would immediately put
‘ an end to such a wicked administration. The
‘ Parliament would immediately remove all such
‘ evil counsellors from about the throne, and prob-
‘ ably send them where they deserved; in which
‘ case, it would be out of their power to advise
‘ the King to remove those placemen that had
‘ voted against them; and the new administration
‘ would be bound in gratitude, to continue in of-
‘ fice those that had contributed to their advance-
‘ ment, and to the relief of their country. Nay,
‘ for their own sakes they would be obliged to
‘ continue them, and to restore such as had been
‘ removed, because those placemen and officers
‘ who had given such a testimony of their honour,
‘ and of their generous love for their country,
‘ would thereby become so popular, and acquire
‘ such an additional interest in their respective
‘ counties, that it would be very dangerous for
‘ the new administration to do them any injustice.

‘ From hence, Sir, I think it is evident, our
‘ constitution can never be in danger from any
‘ number of places and offices that can be held
‘ by the members of this house. On the con-
‘ trary, I think, the chief security of our con-
‘ stitution consists in this very power or capacity,
‘ which the members of this house have, of
‘ enjoying places and offices under the crown;
‘ because,

‘ because, the crown is thereby obliged to em-
‘ ploy gentlemen of character, fortune, and in-
‘ terest, in the executive part of our govern-
‘ ment. When two gentlemen are candidates
‘ for any place or office in the executive part of
‘ our government, both equally qualified as to
‘ personal abilities, but one, a gentleman of good
‘ fortune and family, the other of neither, I be-
‘ lieve it will be granted, that the former ought
‘ to be preferred; and as long as placemen or
‘ officers are allowed seats in this house, or votes
‘ at elections, the crown, or the ministers of the
‘ crown, will certainly prefer the former, in or-
‘ der to prevent his appearing against them, in
‘ all matters of an indifferent nature, either in
‘ this house, or at elections; but if by preferring
‘ him, they should render it impossible for him
‘ to do them any service, either in this house,
‘ or at elections, they would certainly prefer the
‘ other, because he would be a more obedient
‘ and submissive tool, and much more attached
‘ to their personal interest and safety.

‘ The consequence, therefore, of excluding
‘ most placemen and officers from having seats
‘ in this house will be, that in a short time, none
‘ but men of low birth and no fortune will be
‘ employed in our army and navy, and in every
‘ other post or office, that is necessary for the ex-
‘ ecutive part of our government; and if this
‘ should ever happen to be the case, I should
‘ think our constitution in much greater danger,
‘ than it could be, should every member of this
‘ house have a share in the executive, as well as
‘ he has in the legislative part of the government
‘ of his country. For this reason, I must be of
‘ opinion, that as long as you leave the executive
‘ part of your government in the crown, you
‘ ought to leave the constitution upon the footing
‘ it now stands, if you have a mind to preserve it
‘ from

‘ from being overturned by an army commanded
‘ by officers, and assisted by a great number of
‘ placemen, of no birth or fortune in their country,
‘ and consequently, ready to join with an ambi-
‘ tious Prince or minister, in overturning the liber-
‘ ties of their country.

‘ Whilst we have Parliaments, Sir, and those
‘ Parliaments regularly chosen, according to the
‘ laws already in being, I can have no notion, that
‘ the majority of such a Parliament can be prevail-
‘ ed on by places or preferments, to join in arbi-
‘ trary designs or oppressive measures; the only
‘ danger we are in is, lest the crown should be
‘ tempted, or obliged to govern without a Parlia-
‘ ment; and this even the justest and wisest Prince
‘ may find himself obliged to do, if you should
‘ take away all those legal powers, which our an-
‘ cestors have found necessary to be lodged in the
‘ crown, in order to enable it to withstand faction
‘ and sedition. We know how giddy the populace
‘ are in every country: We know how apt the
‘ people are to be led astray by the artful heads of
‘ faction, whose secret designs are generally very
‘ different from their publick professions. All
‘ wise governments foresee dangers and inconveni-
‘ encies at a great distance, and, in order to avoid
‘ these dangers, are often obliged to take measures,
‘ that may seem wrong or oppressive to the igno-
‘ rant: They may often have wise and good rea-
‘ sons for what they do, and yet those reasons
‘ may be such as must not be publickly explained.
‘ These circumstances the heads of faction, the
‘ disaffected, and the discontented, take advantage
‘ of, in order to misrepresent the government to
‘ the multitude; and by these means, even against
‘ a just and wise Prince, a general discontent may
‘ be made to prevail for some short time, and un-
‘ til the eyes of the people be opened. If such a
‘ Prince had no honours to bestow, nor any re-
‘ wards

‘ wards to give to such as do not allow themselves
‘ to be led away by popular clamours, his govern-
‘ ment would be tore to pieces by a factious Par-
‘ liament, or he would be obliged to carry it on
‘ without any Parliament at all; and in either case,
‘ our constitution would be undone.

‘ Against this danger we are guarded, Sir, by
‘ the honours and favours which the crown may
‘ bestow upon those electors and members who do
‘ not, out of an affectation of popularity, chime
‘ in with every popular discontent; and this, I
‘ think, is the only use the crown can make of
‘ those honours, places and offices, which it has,
‘ by our constitution, at its disposal. These ho-
‘ nours, places, and offices, may be a support to
‘ the crown against a popular frenzy or delusion,
‘ and may support it in a legal way, till the people
‘ have leisure to consider, and return to their sen-
‘ ses. By these, many gentlemen may be prevent-
‘ ed from joining with a popular faction, either at
‘ elections or in Parliament, and may at both be
‘ kept firm in their duty to their King and coun-
‘ try; but by these, no gentleman of any family
‘ or fortune can be prevailed on to join with the
‘ crown in destroying the liberties of his country.

‘ I hope, Sir, our liberties and privileges are as
‘ yet in no danger. As long as the people are
‘ guided by a spirit of virtue and publick good,
‘ their liberties and privileges never can be in dan-
‘ ger from any honours or rewards the crown has,
‘ or may have in its power to bestow. But if the
‘ people should ever become so abandoned, as that
‘ a majority of them should be ready to sacrifice
‘ their liberties and privileges for a present reward,
‘ it would, I think, be a very ridiculous under-
‘ taking, to endeavour to guard against it by laws,
‘ which the people would certainly repeal as soon
‘ as their purchasers desired it. Nay, in such a
‘ case, I should think it would be happy for the
‘ people

‘ people to have their liberties and privileges taken
‘ from them; for when the individuals of a com-
‘ munity make no other use of the liberties and
‘ privileges they enjoy, but to prey upon the pub-
‘ lick, I am certain those liberties and privileges
‘ must be taken away, or the community itself
‘ will soon be destroyed. Therefore, if it be sup-
‘ posed, that the crown may, by means of places
‘ and offices, get a majority in Parliament, that,
‘ for the sake of the places and offices they enjoy,
‘ will sacrifice the liberties and privileges of their
‘ country, it may be an argument for putting an
‘ end to all Parliaments, and establishing an unli-
‘ mited power in the crown, but it can be no ar-
‘ gument for the bill now proposed; for if we can
‘ suppose, that a majority of any future Parliament
‘ will be such, as are entirely governed by their
‘ own immediate interest, I am sure they will make
‘ use of the privileges they are invested with as
‘ members, in order to accomplish that which is
‘ their only aim, and if they find they cannot
‘ accomplish it by serving the crown, they will
‘ endeavour to accomplish it by destroying the
‘ crown, and, probably, by overturning our pre-
‘ sent happy establishment.

‘ This, indeed, is the consequence I chiefly
‘ apprehend. We know, Sir, how numerous the
‘ disaffected still are in this kingdom; and they, we
‘ may suppose, are not unsensible of the prejudice
‘ that has been done to their faction, by the places
‘ and offices which are at the disposal of the crown.
‘ These places and offices are, as I have said, of
‘ great use to the crown, and, I think, to the na-
‘ tion, in preventing gentlemen from joining with
‘ a faction, or in winning them away from it;
‘ and the Jacobites are sensible, they have lost
‘ many by this means, some, perhaps, after they
‘ had got them a seat in this house. For this rea-
‘ son, we find, they are, in every part of the
‘ kingdom,

' kingdom, great patrons of this bill. I hope, we
 ' have none of them now in this house; I am sure
 ' the honourable gentlemen who have proposed
 ' and promoted this bill, can lie under no such
 ' imputation, nor can they be suspected of any
 ' such motives; but we know, that without doors,
 ' the clamours for this bill are zealously promoted
 ' by the disaffected, which cannot proceed from
 ' any principle of liberty, because from their prin-
 ' ciples, they must be for enlarging, instead of
 ' diminishing, the power of the crown. It can
 ' proceed from nothing, but an opinion, that it
 ' would promote their cause: And, as I happen,
 ' in this case, to be of the same opinion with
 ' them; as I am afraid that, if this bill should pass
 ' into a law, we might have a majority of Jaco-
 ' bites, instead of placemen in this house, there-
 ' fore, I must be against giving it any countenance,
 ' and, consequently, against the motion for leave
 ' to bring it in.'

The next that spoke in this debate was the Lord Gage, who spoke as follows, *viz.*

Lord Gage's
speech.

' Mr. Speaker,
 ' Sir, As the noble Lord that spoke last, seems
 ' to be under so great an uneasiness, that the offi-
 ' cers of the army and placemen should have been,
 ' as he thinks, reflected upon by those that have
 ' already spoke in this debate, as persons bias'd
 ' by their employments in their way of voting; I
 ' shall therefore, to oblige him, begin by saying
 ' that, to be sure, they are all men of great ho-
 ' nour, great probity, and always vote according
 ' to their consciences.

' I shall now endeavour to answer the objections
 ' made to this bill, by the honourable gentleman
 ' that spoke immediately before the noble Lord:
 ' But hope in the mean time he will forgive me,
 ' if

‘ if I say he has not given any one reason, that
‘ can convince me or any unprejudic’d person,
‘ that a bill for the limitation of places in the
‘ house of Commons, is not a right thing; being,
‘ in my opinion, the chief thing that can preserve
‘ our constitution from destruction.

‘ As I have ever been in this way of thinking,
‘ since in Parliament, and always voted for both
‘ place and pension bills; so I hope, whatever I
‘ shall say in support of the question before us,
‘ may not be looked upon as done from a spirit of
‘ contradiction to those that oppose it, or that I
‘ mean any reflection to any one whatsoever: But
‘ shall beg the indulgence of the house for a few
‘ minutes, to shew the danger that may befall this
‘ nation, if ever there should be an influenced
‘ house of Commons, the probability of its soon
‘ being so, and the necessity to find out, if possi-
‘ ble, a remedy to prevent its ever being so.

‘ No body, Sir, will deny but that, in former
‘ Parliaments, this house has been filled with a
‘ parcel of mercenary wretches, who, *Esau*-like,
‘ sold their birth-rights, and from being born free,
‘ became slaves to their purchasers; and, if it
‘ cannot be denied that former Parliaments have
‘ been corrupted, so future ones may; and there-
‘ fore it is the duty of a good Parliament to pro-
‘ vide laws, if possible, to prevent what must sap
‘ the foundation of our liberties, and the very be-
‘ ing and intent of Parliaments.

‘ To tell the gentlemen of this house of Com-
‘ mons, that a large number of places may not
‘ create an influence, would be imposing upon their
‘ understanding, particularly when the members
‘ hold them no longer, than they vote according
‘ to the dictates of the minister. No, Sir, they
‘ are gentlemen too sensible not to know, that the
‘ touching from 500*l.* to 2 or 3000*l.* *per annum*,
‘ must be a bias over members votes that feel the

‘ weight of it, unless in a Parliament as virtuous
 ‘ as this is; and, if that must be the case, and as
 ‘ many places remain to be disposed of amongst
 ‘ the members in future Parliaments, as there are
 ‘ now, with the pecuniary influence that might
 ‘ also be added, what may not be the conse-
 ‘ quence, if ever *England* had the misfortune to
 ‘ have a bad King?

‘ Then, if there should be a wicked and am-
 ‘ bitious minister, the distributor of corruption,
 ‘ he might raise to himself a faction, that would
 ‘ screen and support him and his destructive mea-
 ‘ sures, to the ruin of their country: For no
 ‘ controul to his actions, or justice on himself for
 ‘ his crimes could be hoped for, when those that
 ‘ were to be his judges, were partakers of his
 ‘ bounty, and shared with him the spoils of their
 ‘ country. Parliaments then, Sir, would only be
 ‘ summoned to grant money; but its misapplica-
 ‘ tion could never be made out, or any redress of
 ‘ grievances expected, when every light, or proof,
 ‘ that might be called for, would be sure to meet
 ‘ with a negative.

‘ What difference would there be (as to any
 ‘ advantages the nation could reap by it) between
 ‘ a Parliament of *Great Britain*, and those of
 ‘ *France*, if the members of a *British* Parliament,
 ‘ by selling themselves for the lucre of their
 ‘ places, became equally subservient to the despo-
 ‘ tick will and pleasure of the Prince on the
 ‘ throne? We then should be told here, as they
 ‘ are there, in answer to all attempts of advice or
 ‘ remonstrances to the crown for the good of the
 ‘ people, *Sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione vo-*
 ‘ *luntas.*

‘ If ever, Sir, there should be such a Parlia-
 ‘ ment as I have been mentioning, as there surely
 ‘ must be sooner or later, if court influence is to
 ‘ prevail in it, what then becomes of all our
 ‘ boasted

‘ boasted liberty, all those valuable privileges,
‘ that were supported at the expence of so much
‘ blood and treasure?

‘ Though I must own, were we always sure of
‘ as good and gracious a King on the throne as
‘ we are blest with at present, or that his suc-
‘ cessors would equal the present heir apparent,
‘ who, by the many princely virtues and qualifi-
‘ cations he is endowed with, presages the happi-
‘ ness we may expect one day or other to enjoy
‘ under his reign, there would be no fear of our
‘ constitution being endangered. But as our liber-
‘ ties may not always be as secure as at this happy
‘ juncture, this bill is to prevent, in future times,
‘ those influences, that may be their ruin.

‘ And I will venture to say, there never was a
‘ bill more wished for by the people of *England*
‘ in general, than this is, they well knowing
‘ how far corruption has and may hurt this na-
‘ tion; nor are they ignorant of how much
‘ larger a number of placemen there are in this
‘ house of Commons, than ever were in any
‘ former, nor what it cost the nation to support
‘ them, and that they are still increasing. Not
‘ but that I am persuaded, they are as thoroughly
‘ convinced as I, and every gentleman that hears
‘ me, places have no influence in this house of
‘ Commons.

‘ The nature of this bill is so well understood,
‘ and has been so well explained, by the gentleman
‘ that moved for leave to bring it in, that I need
‘ say but very little upon that point; it being no
‘ ways intended, if it comes into the committee,
‘ but that people of merit may have their seats in
‘ this house, and enjoy all the offices of state,
‘ treasury, admiralty, board of trade, and what
‘ other places the committee may judge necessary
‘ to have the blank in the bill filled up with.

‘ I will now take notice of the two chief objections made by the honourable gentleman against this bill. As to the first, where he says, that preventing the places being disposed of amongst the members of the house of Commons, would be throwing them into the house of Lords, and thereby make that house too powerful; it can have no foundation from what fell from the gentlemen, that moved for leave to bring in the bill; for they proposed that above a hundred of the great places should remain in the house of Commons as at present; and therefore, those that make up the two hundred now in the house, and intended to be excluded by this bill, for fear of too great an influence, would be of such a nature, that none of the Lords would accept of them.

‘ As to his second objection, that it is a hardship that a gentleman who, through his merit, might be preferred by the crown to a place excepted by this bill, should be debarred thereby the service he might do his country in Parliament, when by the laws now in being, after his accepting the place, he is to be rechose before he can sit; I shall say in answer to it, first, that there is nothing new in the legislature deciding by law, who is proper or not proper to sit in the house of Commons; for let a man be worth a million of money, unless he has 300*l.* a year in land, or issuing out of lands, he, by law, is debarred a seat in this house; which, considering the great property and merit he might be master of, may be thought a hardship.

‘ The same hardships may be complained of by the commissioners of the customs, and excise, as well as several other officers who hold places, and by law are equally debarred a seat in this house; and as the fear of influence was the occasion then, of those officers being deprived

‘ prived this privilege, why may it not be as rea-
‘ sonable now for the Parliament, for the same
‘ cause, to pass a bill to prevent a house of Com-
‘ mons being filled with a much larger number
‘ of placemen, than in former times were ever
‘ heard of?

‘ And as to the second part of this objection,
‘ I can only add, that the legislature which enact-
‘ ed, that a member who accepted of a place,
‘ should be rechose, to be sure, meant well, and
‘ by the by, shews that it thought a place might
‘ influence the member that accepted it, and
‘ therefore judged it not fit he should any longer
‘ sit in the house, unless those who had formerly
‘ entrusted him to represent them, and were sup-
‘ posed best to know his honour and integrity,
‘ could rely on him afterwards.

‘ But alas, Sir, how far does this answer the
‘ intent, when most of the placemen may be
‘ chose for boroughs they never saw, and where
‘ their names, till the time of election, were ne-
‘ ver heard of by their electors, or else for such
‘ venal boroughs, that would prefer a place-
‘ man, thinking he would be best able to bribe
‘ them?

‘ I shall beg leave, in a very few words, to
‘ give one farther reason why this bill is even
‘ more necessary at present, than in former times,
‘ and that is, because Parliaments are chose for
‘ seven years; and, I think, I may draw my ar-
‘ gument from an observation I have made on
‘ a policy used in the military governments a-
‘ broad, which may equally serve for the present
‘ question.

‘ There, whenever a Prince garisons a fortified
‘ town, whose only security in it is the troops he
‘ has placed there, he never entrusts them to stay
‘ above two or three years at farthest, well know-
‘ ing the danger that might ensue, if they and

‘ the towns-men should grow too intimate: So,
 ‘ Sir, a Parliament, that is designed as a guard to
 ‘ the liberty of the people, against any encroach-
 ‘ ments of the crown, is much more liable to be
 ‘ corrupted when chose for seven years, than it
 ‘ could have been, as formerly, when annual,
 ‘ or but for three years. For in that length of
 ‘ time, the crown may easier find ways of being
 ‘ more intimate with its Parliament, than consists
 ‘ with the safety of the people.

‘ I shall add but one reason more, why I shall
 ‘ be for this bill, and that is, because I am re-
 ‘ quired so by my constituents, who, I think,
 ‘ have a right to direct those that represent them;
 ‘ and, as they themselves are above being cor-
 ‘ rupted, so no wonder they should wish to see a
 ‘ bill pass, that they hope may prevent a biased
 ‘ house of Commons: And I am not ashamed to
 ‘ own, that the instructions I have in my pocket,
 ‘ will weigh with me, and don’t in the least doubt
 ‘ but that those gentlemen, who oppose this bill,
 ‘ will find the weight of theirs in their pockets.

‘ If a bill of this nature is never to pass, I will
 ‘ foretel, That as under the shew and mask of
 ‘ religion, the most wicked things have been exe-
 ‘ cuted, so under the specious name of a Parlia-
 ‘ ment, no longer the guardian of the people
 ‘ but a ministerial tool, *England* will be en-
 ‘ flaved.’

The next speech we shall give, was that made
 by *William Pulteney*, Esq; which was in substance
 as follows, *viz.*

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Pulteney's speech.

‘ Sir, The opposition made to this motion is,
 ‘ in my opinion, one of the strongest arguments
 ‘ that can be made use of in its favour, and
 ‘ must, I think, appear so to every man, who
 ‘ considers

‘ considers the persons concerned in that opposi-
‘ tion, and the arguments they make use of for
‘ supporting it. Who are the persons that oppose
‘ this motion? Who are they that have always
‘ opposed such motions? Placemen, ministers,
‘ and the favourites or pensioners of ministers.
‘ What do they say for justifying their opposition?
‘ They deny a principle, a maxim, which in all
‘ ages, in all countries, has hitherto been acknow-
‘ ledged, and, upon which, many of our laws
‘ now in being are founded. That a gentleman’s
‘ behaviour in this house, may be influenced by a
‘ place, or a pension, is a maxim universally ac-
‘ knowledged, and in this kingdom so much esta-
‘ blished, that we have, already, by law, ex-
‘ cluded many of the former, and all the latter,
‘ from having seats in this house. We have, al-
‘ ready, by law, excluded all pensioners from
‘ having seats in this house, and, I should be
‘ glad to know the difference between a pension
‘ of 1000*l.* a year, and a place with a salary of
‘ 1000*l.* a year. I know of none, save only
‘ that the latter is generally more valuable than
‘ the former; and, therefore, a gentleman will
‘ be more loth to lose it, or to give a vote in this
‘ house, that may disoblige a minister who can
‘ take it from him.

‘ I say, Sir, that a place, with a salary of
‘ 1000*l.* a year, is more valuable than a pension
‘ of 1000*l.* a year; because a place furnishes a
‘ gentleman with an opportunity to serve his
‘ friends, and, perhaps, to provide some of them
‘ with little places or offices under him. To
‘ which I must add, that a place often furnishes
‘ a gentleman, who is not very scrupulous, with
‘ an opportunity of plundering his country year-
‘ ly, of twice, perhaps ten times, the value of
‘ his salary; and this, I must observe, makes
‘ another very material difference between a place

‘ and a pension : A placeman may very probably
‘ be a person, whose conduct this house ought to
‘ enquire into : He may be a publick criminal,
‘ and therefore, he will certainly be against an
‘ impartial and strict enquiry into the conduct
‘ of any minister, officer, or placeman, lest the
‘ enquiry should at last light upon himself. There
‘ is, therefore, greater reason for excluding all
‘ placemen, than for excluding all pensioners,
‘ from having seats in this house. Our admit-
‘ ting some of the former, does not proceed
‘ from an opinion, that a gentleman’s behaviour
‘ may not be influenced by a place, as much as
‘ by a pension, but from the necessity we are un-
‘ der, of having some great officers amongst us,
‘ in order to give us proper information and di-
‘ rection, in many affairs that must come under
‘ our consideration.

‘ For this reason, when I hear gentlemen,
‘ who have very good places, gravely telling us,
‘ that no gentleman of family or fortune can,
‘ by any place he may enjoy or expect, be in-
‘ duced to join in measures, that may be of
‘ dangerous consequence to the constitution or
‘ liberties of his country, I think it is a clear
‘ proof, not only that the behaviour of a gentle-
‘ man of family and fortune may be influenced
‘ by the post he enjoys or expects, but also, that
‘ his judgment may be biaſſed. He may be,
‘ thereby, induced to think those things indiffe-
‘ rent, or of no moment, that are far from be-
‘ ing so : He may be, thereby, induced to think
‘ those measures right, that to every impartial
‘ man appear to be pernicious : He may be,
‘ thereby, induced to think the liberties of his
‘ country in no danger, when they are upon the
‘ very brink of destruction. I shall grant, Sir,
‘ that we ought not rashly, and without just
‘ cause, to make any alteration in our constitu-
‘ tion,

‘ tion, nor ought we to frighten ourselves with
‘ fanciful dangers; but if the danger we now
‘ apprehend, from the great number of officers
‘ and placemen in this house, be suggested only
‘ by a melancholy and gloomy disposition, that
‘ disposition is, I am sure, now become epide-
‘ mical; for there is not, I believe, a man in
‘ the nation, not possessed, or in expectation of
‘ some post or pension under the crown, who
‘ does not apprehend this danger, or who is not
‘ convinced of its being not only real, but im-
‘ minent. Placemen and pensioners may, it is
‘ true, be of a more gay disposition than others,
‘ and therefore, not so apt to apprehend our
‘ constitution’s being in danger; but for this
‘ very reason, we ought not to have a majority
‘ of them in this house; for if ever we should,
‘ I may prognosticate, that their gayety will give
‘ the rest of the nation good cause to be melan-
‘ choly.

‘ An honourable gentleman who has had se-
‘ veral, and has now a very good place, has
‘ been pleased to tell us, that we ought never to
‘ think of providing against any danger, till it
‘ be felt, as well as foreseen. I do not know,
‘ Sir, what that gentleman may feel, or foresee;
‘ but I can assure him, the nation thinks it has
‘ often felt the influence of places and pensions
‘ in this house. I shall not undertake the invi-
‘ dious task of shewing how, or when, that in-
‘ fluence has been felt; but I may say in gene-
‘ ral, that even of late years, there have been
‘ many questions in this house, which would not
‘ have gone as they did, had we had few or no
‘ officers or placemen amongst us; and if all the
‘ officers and placemen would now retire, or re-
‘ fuse to give their votes in this question, in
‘ which they may properly be said to be parties
‘ concerned, I should not doubt the success of
‘ my

‘ my honourable friend’s motion. In this house,
‘ we ought to see with the same eyes our consti-
‘ tuents see with, and we ought to feel what the
‘ nation feels, which is a good reason for our
‘ admitting but few placemen, and no pensioners
‘ amongst us ; for both the seeing and feeling of
‘ him who receives 500*l.* or 1000*l.* a year, will
‘ always be very different from the seeing and
‘ feeling of those that pay it. The difference
‘ between the foresight of placemen, and that of
‘ the nation, is notorious, and very remarkable,
‘ in this, that the former are mighty quick at
‘ foreseeing those dangers, which occasion the
‘ keeping up of a standing army, but with re-
‘ gard to those dangers that threaten our con-
‘ stitution, they have hitherto appeared to be al-
‘ most quite blind ; whereas the nation has al-
‘ ways been, and, I hope, always will be, quick-
‘ sighted with regard to those dangers that
‘ threaten our constitution, and never very ap-
‘ prehensive of any of those dangers that are
‘ usually pretended for our keeping up a nume-
‘ rous standing army. This, I say, is a remark-
‘ able difference, with regard to the faculty of
‘ seeing or foreseeing any danger ; and with re-
‘ gard to that of feeling, it is certain, a gentle-
‘ man of 1000*l.* a year estate, who pays 700*l.*
‘ a year towards our national taxes, and has a
‘ pension or salary of 1000*l.* a year paid him
‘ out of those taxes, can never be so sensible of
‘ their weight, as another gentleman of 1000*l.* a
‘ year estate, who pays but 500*l.* a year towards
‘ our national taxes, and has no pension or salary
‘ coming in. Therefore, I hope, the honoura-
‘ ble gentleman will forgive me, if I say, that
‘ our liberties may be in the most imminent and
‘ real danger, though neither he, nor any other
‘ placeman, either feels or foresees it ; and this,
‘ I think, is a very good reason, why our liber-
‘ ties

‘ ties should not be committed to their keep-
‘ ing.

‘ I shall admit, Sir, that a gentleman of fa-
‘ mily, fortune, character, and interest in his
‘ country, is not so liable to be influenced by a
‘ place he may enjoy or expect, as one who has
‘ none of these advantages; but will any gen-
‘ tleman say, that none but gentlemen of fami-
‘ ly, fortune, character, and interest in their
‘ country, can get themselves chosen members of
‘ this house? Do not we know, that a minister
‘ may get a man chosen, though he has neither
‘ family, fortune, character, nor interest to re-
‘ commend him? Do not we know, that most
‘ of the little boroughs upon our coasts, are al-
‘ ready, by means of our custom-house, and
‘ sea officers, brought entirely under the direc-
‘ tion of our administration? And if the late
‘ excise-scheme had passed into a law, I believe,
‘ the case would, by this time, have been the
‘ same, with regard to most of the little inland
‘ boroughs in the kingdom. Suppose this should
‘ hereafter be brought about, by means of some
‘ such scheme, past into a law, at the end of a
‘ session, and before people had time to consider
‘ its consequences: Could we suppose, that a
‘ wicked or ambitious minister, would ever al-
‘ low a gentleman of family or fortune to be
‘ chosen by any of the boroughs under his di-
‘ rection, unless he were such a one as would be
‘ influenced by the place the minister had given,
‘ or could give him?

‘ In this case, Sir, let us consider, that of the
‘ five hundred and thirteen members that repre-
‘ sent *England* and *Wales*, there are but ninety-
‘ two chosen by counties, and of the remaining
‘ four hundred and twenty-one, there are at least
‘ three hundred and fifty chosen by cities, bo-
‘ roughs, and cinque ports, where the admini-
‘ stration

‘ stration would have the absolute command and
‘ direction. If this should ever happen to be
‘ our unlucky fate, can we suppose, that any
‘ gentleman would set up to be a member of
‘ this house, or a representative even for any of
‘ our counties, but such as resolved to submit,
‘ with regard to their behaviour here, to the ab-
‘ solute direction of the prime minister? For no
‘ gentleman of honour would put himself to ex-
‘ pence, or expose himself to the resentment of
‘ an all-powerful minister, if by setting up as a
‘ candidate at any election, he were absolutely
‘ certain that he could thereby do his country no
‘ service. Instead of gentlemen of family, for-
‘ tune, character, or interest in their country,
‘ we should then see this house filled with the
‘ lowest tools, and vilest sycophants of absolute
‘ power. Instead of this house’s being a check
‘ upon ministers, it would then, like the Parlia-
‘ ments of *France*, or the *Roman* senates under
‘ their Emperors, be an instrument for the op-
‘ pressions of ministers, and a cloak for their
‘ crimes. The most rapacious plunderer, the
‘ most tyrannical oppressor, would then insolent-
‘ ly boast, that he did nothing but according to
‘ law, that the publick treasure was regularly ac-
‘ counted for in Parliament, and that he was at
‘ all times ready to submit his conduct to a par-
‘ liamentary enquiry.

‘ Surely, Sir, no gentleman can think, that
‘ the liberties of this nation consist in our having
‘ the resemblance of a Parliament. We may
‘ have a Parliament, that Parliament may be
‘ chosen once every seven years, may sit annual-
‘ ly as it does now, may pass laws, grant mo-
‘ ney, receive accounts, and even make enqui-
‘ ries, and yet we may have neither constitution
‘ nor liberty left; for if it should once come to
‘ be in the power of the administration, to have
‘ always

‘ always a majority in Parliament, ready to obey
‘ the directions given them by the ministers,
‘ there would be no necessity for destroying the
‘ very form of our constitution, or for making a
‘ direct and absolute surrender of our liberties :
‘ Without either of these, our Sovereign would
‘ be as absolute, and might be more tyrannical,
‘ than the Grand Seignior himself. Such a Par-
‘ liament would grant him as many Spahis and
‘ Janizaries, as he thought necessary for keep-
‘ ing his slaves in subjection, would give him
‘ any revenue he pleased to demand, and would
‘ pass whatever laws he might please to propose;
‘ and the judges, being under no parliamentary
‘ restraint, would, in every part of his domi-
‘ nions, give judgment according to the direc-
‘ tions of the Prime Vizir, or governing Bashaw.
‘ Thus oppression would be countenanced by
‘ the forms of law, and the people plundered,
‘ the innocent murdered, by the administration
‘ of justice.

‘ It is this sort of ruin, Sir, we have chiefly
‘ to apprehend, and this sort of ruin we may,
‘ step by step, be led into, without our being
‘ sensible of the several steps. We shall cer-
‘ tainly be led into it, if we trust, any longer,
‘ the guardianship of our liberties to those, whose
‘ foresight is blunted by the places they enjoy or
‘ expect. If a minister were to propose a law
‘ for giving the crown a power of sending to
‘ every county, city, and borough in the king-
‘ dom, such a *congè d’elire* for the choice of
‘ members of Parliament, as is now sent to a
‘ dean and chapter for the choice of a bishop, I
‘ believe, very few gentlemen of family or for-
‘ tune would, for the sake of any place, agree
‘ to it; but an equivalent power may be got by
‘ multiplying penal laws, and increasing the
‘ number and power of officers; and a gentle-
‘ man

‘ man of family, fortune, character, and interest
‘ in his country, may, by a good place, be in-
‘ duced to believe, that such a law, or such an
‘ increase of the number and power of officers,
‘ is necessary for preventing fraudulent practices,
‘ or the like ; and may, therefore, agree to it,
‘ without seeing the danger our constitution may
‘ be thereby exposed to : Thus by degrees he
‘ may be made to agree to such propositions,
‘ one after another, till he has thereby establish-
‘ ed in the crown, the absolute direction of most
‘ of the elections in the kingdom.

‘ This, Sir, would have been the certain con-
‘ sequence of the late excise-scheme ; and yet
‘ there were many gentlemen of family and for-
‘ tune that approved of it. I am convinced they
‘ did not foresee this consequence. Nay, I have
‘ so much charity, as to believe, that the chief
‘ patron of that scheme did not foresee this con-
‘ sequence ; but every impartial man in the king-
‘ dom is now, I believe, sensible of it. That
‘ scheme was, indeed, such a large step towards
‘ giving the crown the direction of most of our
‘ elections, and by good luck, was so thorough-
‘ ly considered, before it was brought into this
‘ house, that most gentlemen became sensible of
‘ the danger, before it was too late ; and this
‘ was the cause of its meeting with the fate it
‘ deserved ; but its fate will be a warning to fu-
‘ ture ministers, not to attempt making such a
‘ large step at once : They will from thence see,
‘ that they must grasp at this power by little and
‘ little, which they will certainly do, and as cer-
‘ tainly, at last, accomplish, unless we take care
‘ to exclude from this house, most of those who,
‘ by the places they enjoy, are induced to have
‘ a better opinion of ministers, than any man
‘ ought to have, that is intrusted with the guar-
‘ dianship

‘ dianship of the constitution and liberties of his
‘ country.

‘ The question is not, Sir, whether a gentleman
‘ may be induced, by the office or place he holds
‘ or expects, to make at once, and in an open and
‘ direct manner, an absolute surrender of the liber-
‘ ties of his country: No Prince or minister of
‘ common sense, will ever desire such a surrender;
‘ because, if he can get into his hands, an uncon-
‘ trolable power over most of our elections, and,
‘ consequently, the direction of the Parliaments
‘ chosen by this uncontrollable power, his power
‘ will, in every respect, be as absolute, and may
‘ be exercised in a more arbitrary manner, and
‘ with greater security to himself, than it could be,
‘ without the appearance of a parliamentary autho-
‘ rity; for every unpopular and oppressive measure
‘ would then be made the act and deed of the
‘ Parliament, and the lenity of the minister in the
‘ execution of those penal laws enacted by Parlia-
‘ ment, or in the exercise of those powers granted
‘ him by Parliament, would be set forth and ex-
‘ tolled by his tools in a *Gazetteer*, or some such
‘ paper, published by his authority, and dispersed
‘ through the whole kingdom at the publick ex-
‘ pence. The question, therefore, now before us
‘ is, whether a gentleman’s eyes may not, by a
‘ lucrative and honourable post or employment,
‘ be so overclouded, as to prevent his seeing
‘ through the plausible pretences, that may, from
‘ time to time, be made use of, by an artful mi-
‘ nister, for getting into his hands, or into the
‘ hands of the crown, such an uncontrollable pow-
‘ er, as I have mentioned; and this question, even
‘ with respect to gentlemen of family and fortune,
‘ will, I am sure, be answered in the affirmative,
‘ by every man in the kingdom, who does not
‘ possess or expect some post, or employment, or
‘ some of those titles of honour, which, by our
‘ constitution,

‘ constitution, as it is now modelled, the crown
‘ has absolutely at its disposal.

‘ To tell us, Sir, that our liberties can never be
‘ in danger from a majority of placemen in this
‘ house, unless the people be generally abandoned,
‘ as to all principles of virtue and publick good,
‘ and unless the crown has, at the same time,
‘ formed designs against our liberties; and that the
‘ only method for removing this danger, in case
‘ we should, at any time, be threatened with it,
‘ would be to take proper measures for restoring
‘ virtue, and publick spirit among the people, and
‘ for removing evil counsellors from about the
‘ throne: To tell us this, I say, Sir, in a serious
‘ manner, is something very extraordinary: It is
‘ mistaking the effect for the cause, and desiring us
‘ to begin at the wrong end. Corruption, Sir, is
‘ not the effect, but the cause of a general depra-
‘ vity of manners among the people of any coun-
‘ try, and has in all countries, as well as this, been
‘ first practised and encouraged by ministers and
‘ courtiers. It would, therefore, be ridiculous in
‘ us, to think of restoring virtue among the peo-
‘ ple, till we have once made it impossible for mi-
‘ nisters and courtiers to corrupt them; and, I am
‘ sure, it would be still more ridiculous in us, to
‘ think of removing an evil counsellor from about
‘ the throne, till we have once removed his crea-
‘ tures and tools out of this house.

‘ I hope, Sir, there are at present no evil coun-
‘ sellors about the throne: If there were, I am
‘ sure, no such counsellor has a majority of his
‘ creatures and tools in this house. If this were
‘ the case, it would have been very ridiculous to
‘ have made such a motion as this now before us.
‘ It would be very ridiculous to think of restoring
‘ our constitution by any legal method: It is this
‘ misfortune we intend to prevent by the bill now
‘ moved for. It is a misfortune now foreseen by
‘ all

‘ all unprejudiced men in the kingdom. I hope it
‘ is not yet too late to think of preventing it by a
‘ legal method; for after we have once fallen into
‘ this misfortune, it will be impossible to recover.
‘ If an ambitious minister should once get a major-
‘ rity of his creatures and tools into this house,
‘ can we suppose they would consent to impeach,
‘ or remove him from the throne? Can we sup-
‘ pose, they would ever consent to any bill that
‘ might tend to distress the administration of their
‘ master? Can we suppose, they would refuse any
‘ thing that might tend to prolong his administra-
‘ tion and increase his power? Every attempt to
‘ restore the constitution, would be branded with
‘ the name of republicanism: The discontents of
‘ the people would be called disaffection and Jaco-
‘ bitism: Every opposition would be said to pro-
‘ ceed from malice and resentment; and the mis-
‘ fortune would be, that many honest well-mean-
‘ ing men, induced by their places to have a better
‘ opinion of ministers than they ought to have,
‘ would give credit to these pretences, and would
‘ believe, that by agreeing to the minister’s arbi-
‘ trary schemes, they were only strengthening the
‘ hands of the government against republicanism,
‘ Jacobitism, and sedition.

‘ If it were possible to be merry in a debate of
‘ so great importance, it would be diverting to
‘ observe the contradiction in the arguments made
‘ use of against this motion. By some, our gen-
‘ tlemen of family and fortune are represented to
‘ be men of such strict honour, and such clear
‘ heads, that no place or pension can mislead their
‘ judgment, or direct their will; no selfish con-
‘ sideration can make them overlook the danger our
‘ liberties may be exposed to, or consent to any
‘ thing, they think may in the least endanger our
‘ constitution. By others again, our gentlemen of
‘ family and fortune are represented as such selfish,
VOL. XIX. O ‘ mercenary

‘ mercenary creatures, that unless the government
‘ would give them some post or pension, they
‘ would refuse to consent to those things that are
‘ absolutely necessary for the ends of government,
‘ and the preservation of their country. Now
‘ these two contradictory positions, though they
‘ cannot be equally true, may be, and, I believe,
‘ they are equally false. We have, I believe, some
‘ gentlemen amongst us, whose judgment cannot
‘ be biased, nor their will directed, by any selfish
‘ consideration. Such men, I hope, we shall al-
‘ ways have in some of our highest offices, and
‘ these are not designed by this bill to be excluded
‘ from having seats in this house; but their num-
‘ ber will always be small, and, therefore, not
‘ sufficient by themselves alone, to support the
‘ constitution against a combination of all the fools
‘ and knaves that may hereafter get into this
‘ house; therefore, we must endeavour to prevent
‘ this combination, and this can only be done by
‘ such a bill as is now proposed.

‘ On the other hand, Sir, I believe there may
‘ be some amongst us, who propose nothing by
‘ their service in this house, but their own private
‘ advantage; and whilst we have placemen and
‘ pensioners amongst us, such men will endeavour
‘ all they can to get into Parliament. Nay, it
‘ may become so customary for every man that
‘ votes with the court, to have a place or a pen-
‘ sion, that no man will do so without some such
‘ reward. But if ever this selfish spirit should get
‘ into Parliament, our constitution will be undone;
‘ and to prevent this, is the design of the bill now
‘ moved for: If no man could, by being a mem-
‘ ber of Parliament, propose to get any place or
‘ office, or any advantage to himself, the merce-
‘ nary and selfish would seldom endeavour to get
‘ themselves chosen, at least they would never be
‘ at any expence for this purpose; and as such
‘ men

‘ men have seldom a great natural interest in any
‘ part of the kingdom, there would always be such
‘ a small number of them in Parliament, that their
‘ opposition could never obstruct or retard any
‘ thing that seemed necessary for the just ends of
‘ government, or for the preservation and happi-
‘ ness of the society. The publick good would
‘ then be the only aim of ministers, as well as
‘ members, because neither of them could hope
‘ for success in any other; and as men of good
‘ sense and strict honour are the best judges of,
‘ and the most ready to agree upon what is neces-
‘ sary for the publick good, it would then be as
‘ much the business of ministers to get such men
‘ chosen, as it is now their business to get such
‘ members chosen, as are men of mercenary tem-
‘ pers, or shallow understandings; for all ministers
‘ will have jobs to do in Parliament, as long as
‘ they have any hopes of success, and the weak
‘ or mercenary will always be the most proper for
‘ this purpose.

‘ I am, indeed, surprized, Sir, to hear it said
‘ by an honourable gentleman, whose attachment
‘ to the present establishment is not to be doubted,
‘ that if most placemen were excluded from this
‘ house, there would soon be a majority of Jaco-
‘ bites in it. Such a supposition is not to be made,
‘ without first supposing, that a great majority of
‘ the people are Jacobites, and to suppose this, is,
‘ I am sure, no compliment to our present Royal
‘ Family, and much less to the King now upon
‘ our throne. As long as our Parliaments are
‘ independent, and our elections free, there can
‘ never be any considerable number of Jacobites,
‘ either in this house, or in the nation; but if there
‘ should once come to be a majority of placemen
‘ and officers in this house, that majority would
‘ soon create a majority of Jacobites in the nation;
‘ and in that case, though the majority within
‘ doors

‘ doors might be a good security to ministers
‘ against parliamentary prosecutions, yet it would
‘ be but a bad security to the Royal Family, a-
‘ gainst an insurrection of the whole people with-
‘ out doors. The army, upon which we now
‘ seem so much to depend, or a great part of them,
‘ would, probably, join with the people, and the
‘ certain consequence would be the overthrow of
‘ our present establishment. This danger, I know,
‘ a guilty minister will always chuse to expose his
‘ master to, rather than expose himself to a legal
‘ trial, before a free and independent Parliament:
‘ Because in a general conflagration, he may, possi-
‘ bly, escape notice, or may, perhaps, be able to
‘ sacrifice his master, by way of an atonement for
‘ himself; but those who support him in thus ex-
‘ posing his master, can have no great regard for
‘ their Sovereign, and in such an event, would
‘ certainly meet with the contempt and punish-
‘ ment they so highly deserved.

‘ For this reason, Sir, as I have a greater regard
‘ for the security of the Royal Family, than I
‘ have for the security of our present ministers, or
‘ of any set of ministers that shall ever get into the
‘ management of our publick affairs, I shall be for
‘ putting it out of the power of any future minister,
‘ to overturn our constitution, by getting a major-
‘ ity of placemen and pensioners into this house.
‘ This, I think, is now become absolutely necessa-
‘ ry, for preventing our being brought under one
‘ of the worst sorts of tyrannical governments that
‘ was ever contrived or established. For this pur-
‘ pose, the bill now moved for is one of the most
‘ certain, and one of the most obvious methods
‘ that can be thought of. It can be attended with
‘ no inconvenience. It is impossible to shew so
‘ much as a plausible reason against it; and, there-
‘ fore, if this motion be rejected, it must afford a
‘ most melancholy reflexion to every one that un-
‘ derstands

‘derstands our constitution, and has a regard for
‘the liberties of his country.’

Upon this gentleman’s sitting down, Sir *Robert Walpole* stood up, and spoke to this effect, viz.

‘Mr. Speaker,

‘Sir, I was a little surprized to hear it said, by Sir Robert Walpole’s speech.
‘the honourable gentleman who spoke last, that
‘this motion’s being opposed by ministers and
‘placemen, is a strong argument in its favour. In
‘my opinion, this is a sort of begging the ques-
‘tion. Before we can suppose this to be an argu-
‘ment in favour of the motion, we must suppose,
‘that ministers and placemen oppose it, not because
‘they think it wrong, but because they are mi-
‘nisters and placemen, which is the very question
‘now in debate. I do not believe, that ever any
‘minister or placeman opposed, or supported a
‘question in this house, contrary to his private
‘sentiments, and only, because he was a minister
‘or placeman. I am sure, their conduct of late
‘years has given us no room to think so; nor can
‘we ever have room to think so, as long as none
‘but gentlemen of credit and honour are employed
‘in the administration, or in any place of honour
‘and profit under the crown. If mere upstarts,
‘or persons of no fortune or credit in their coun-
‘try, were employed, and by illegal methods
‘brought into this house, for by fair means they
‘could not, there might be some room for making
‘such a supposition, and then there would be some
‘cause for bringing in such a bill as is now pro-
‘posed; but when I look round me, and consider
‘the particular circumstances of those gentlemen
‘now here, who have the honour to be at the
‘same time in the service of the crown, I must look
‘upon the danger, now pretended to be so real

‘ and imminent, to be as chimerical a danger, as
‘ the most luxuriant fancy can invent.

‘ I shall agree with the honourable gentlemen
‘ who seem so fond of this bill, that if the
‘ crown could gain an absolute and uncontrollable
‘ power over all, or a majority of the elections
‘ in the kingdom, every Parliament thus
‘ chosen by the power, would be under the direction
‘ of the crown, and in this case our constitution
‘ would be at an end; but this I think
‘ impossible. Whilst the crown pursues right
‘ measures; whilst none but gentlemen of good
‘ credit and fortune are employed in the administration,
‘ or in any superior post or office under
‘ the administration, the crown will certainly
‘ have a great influence both in Parliament, and
‘ at elections; but this proceeds from the wisdom
‘ and uprightness of its measures, and from
‘ the natural weight of those that are employed;
‘ and it would certainly cease, as soon as the
‘ crown began to pursue contrary measures; because,
‘ we must suppose, the administration
‘ would then certainly be deserted, and opposed
‘ by all, or most gentlemen of any fortune or
‘ credit in their country. This, I say, we must
‘ suppose, unless we can suppose, that gentlemen
‘ of fortune and credit in their country,
‘ would unite in measures for making a sacrifice
‘ of themselves, as well as their country; which
‘ is a supposition that cannot, I think, be made,
‘ nor pretended, by any man whose head is
‘ sound, and heart sincere.

‘ In all questions, Sir, which do not admit of
‘ demonstration, there must be a variety of opinions;
‘ and as questions of a political nature
‘ are less capable of demonstration than any
‘ other, it is natural to see a difference of sentiments
‘ in every country like this, where the
‘ people have not only a power to judge, but a
‘ liberty

‘ liberty to talk and write against the measures
‘ pursued by the government: This is natural,
‘ and even necessary, in every country where the
‘ people are free; and as every man is fond of
‘ his own opinion, and fully convinced of his
‘ having reason on his side, he is apt to imagine,
‘ that those who differ from him, must be go-
‘ verned by some prejudice, or by some selfish
‘ consideration. From hence it is, that all those
‘ who disapprove of the measures of the govern-
‘ ment conclude, that the approbation of those
‘ that differ from them, proceeds from the influ-
‘ ence of some lucrative post they are in posses-
‘ sion or expectation of; and on the other hand,
‘ those that approve of, and support the mea-
‘ sures pursued by the government, are apt to
‘ conclude, that the opposition is entirely owing
‘ to party-prejudice, or to malice and resent-
‘ ment. For my part, I shall always endeavour
‘ to keep in the middle course, and to believe
‘ that both are in the wrong; and, therefore, I
‘ shall always be against any alteration in our
‘ constitution, when I think, that the alteration
‘ proposed, is founded upon one or other of
‘ these mistakes. I should be as much against
‘ restraining the liberties of the people, in order
‘ to prevent that influence which is supposed to
‘ proceed from party-prejudice, malice, and
‘ resentment, as I shall be against restraining the
‘ power or free choice of the crown, in order to
‘ prevent that influence which is supposed to
‘ proceed from the disposal of places and prefer-
‘ ments. There may, perhaps, I believe there
‘ always will, be a little of each in the nation;
‘ but neither can ever be of any dangerous con-
‘ sequence to our constitution: On the contrary,
‘ they serve as a balance to each other; so that
‘ by removing either, without removing the o-

‘ ther at the same time, the constitution will run
‘ a great risk of being overturned.

‘ There are many causes, Sir, which naturally
‘ raise a party against the best and wisest admini-
‘ stration. In this life, it is impossible for us to be
‘ compleatly happy. All men feel some wants,
‘ pressures, or misfortunes; and very few are wil-
‘ ling to impute them to their own folly, or to any
‘ mistake in their own conduct. To such men,
‘ the administration is in politicks, what the de-
‘ vil is in religion; it is the author of all their
‘ misdeeds, and the cause of all their sufferings:
‘ This naturally breeds in them a bad opinion
‘ of the administration, and then, of course,
‘ they not only condemn, but oppose all its mea-
‘ sures. This must raise a great many enemies
‘ to the administration in every country, and
‘ their number will be considerably increased by
‘ those that are disappointed of the honours or
‘ preferments they expected, and justly, as they
‘ thought, deserved; as well as by those that
‘ wish for a change in the administration, for no
‘ other reason, but because they hope for a share
‘ in the next. In all countries it is honourable
‘ to have a share in the government of one’s
‘ country: In rich countries it is profitable as
‘ well as honourable; and as there are but a very
‘ few in any country that can have a share of the
‘ government, and still fewer that can have such
‘ a share as, they think, they deserve, there must
‘ be many candidates for every title of honour,
‘ or post of profit that is to be disposed of.
‘ Of these candidates, one only can be chosen,
‘ and all the rest will, of course, think they
‘ have had injustice done them; for few men are
‘ so modest as to think such a disappointment
‘ owing to their own want of merit, or to the
‘ superior merit of their rival; and from thence
‘ they will begin to entertain a secret animosity,
‘ nay,

‘ nay, perhaps, they will declare an open enmity
‘ to those at the head of the administration.

‘ By these two sorts of men united together,
‘ there will always be a considerable party in every
‘ country, ready to condemn and vilify the wisest
‘ measures that can be pursued by the administra-
‘ tion ; and, as in every free country there are dif-
‘ ferent parties, as in this country there are at pre-
‘ sent, and, I believe, always will be different par-
‘ ties, the parties that are by their profession and
‘ principles opposite to the party in power, will be
‘ ready to find fault with every thing done by the
‘ administration. In this country, I say, Sir, there
‘ are, and, I believe, always will be different par-
‘ ties : There are at present, and will be, as long
‘ as our present happy establishment endures, three
‘ different parties in this kingdom : The Jacobites
‘ of one side, the republicans of the other, which
‘ I may call the two extremes ; and the party for
‘ supporting our present happy establishment,
‘ which may be justly called the proper mean
‘ between these two extremes.

‘ Thus, Sir, we may see what a numerous
‘ party our administration must always have to
‘ struggle with. All these sorts of men, the
‘ discontented, the disappointed, the Jacobites,
‘ and the republicans, will always be ready to
‘ condemn and oppose the measures of the admi-
‘ nistration, let them be never so wise, let them
‘ be never so just ; and by their arguments they
‘ will often be able to prevail with some well-
‘ meaning and unthinking men, or at least to
‘ stagger them in their opinions. With regard
‘ to Parliaments, and the choice of members of
‘ Parliament, our administration has no defence
‘ against this formidable union of parties, but by
‘ the wisdom of their measures to engage most
‘ gentlemen of credit and fortune in their in-
‘ terest. Whilst the administration pursues right
‘ mea-

I

‘ measures, such gentlemen will be ready to join
‘ with them, and by this means the administration
‘ will always have a prevailing influence,
‘ both in Parliament, and at elections; for when
‘ a majority of those who have the best fortunes,
‘ and greatest interest in their respective countries,
‘ are friends to the administration, it is not
‘ at all surprizing, that an administration, by
‘ means of such friends, should have a prevailing
‘ influence at elections, as well as in Parliament.
‘ But such friends, or at least a great
‘ number of such, no administration can have,
‘ that pursues measures inconsistent with the
‘ good of the community in general.

‘ I shall grant, Sir, that a title of honour, or
‘ a lucrative post or employment, may be of
‘ some service in prevailing with a gentleman to
‘ judge favourably of the government’s measures,
‘ in all cases where he is wavering in his
‘ opinion; but a bad government can never, by
‘ this way, gain many friends; even a good government
‘ can never gain near so many friends,
‘ as it will lose by causeless discontents and just
‘ disappointments; and if you should take away
‘ from the crown the chief advantage it can reap
‘ by the disposal of posts and employments, not
‘ only a good administration, but even the crown
‘ itself, may sink under the weight of party-prejudice,
‘ supported by causeless discontent, and
‘ just disappointment; therefore, to support the
‘ crown against the disadvantages and opposition
‘ which the wisest and best administration must
‘ always have to struggle with, I think, you
‘ ought to leave it in the power of the crown to
‘ dispose of all posts and employments, in the
‘ same manner they have been hitherto, without
‘ any bad effect, disposed of.

‘ If you should, by the bill now proposed,
‘ exclude all gentlemen in any place or office under
‘ der

‘ der the crown, from having seats in this house,
‘ you would, in my opinion, Sir, bring the con-
‘ stitution into much greater danger, than it can
‘ ever be brought into, by any number of place-
‘ men and officers that can be in this house; for
‘ the crown would, in that case, be laid under a
‘ necessity to imploy none but men of low fortunes
‘ and no interest; because, if the places and offices
‘ under the crown, should be given to gentlemen
‘ of character and distinction in their respective
‘ countries, and they thereby excluded from hav-
‘ ing seats in this house, the chief friends of the
‘ government being thus rendered incapable of
‘ standing candidates at elections, the disaffected,
‘ or discontented interest would prevail in every
‘ part of the kingdom; and in that case, this house
‘ would soon be filled with such as were declared
‘ enemies to the administration. To prevent this
‘ consequence, the administration would, therefore,
‘ be obliged to imploy none in any post or office
‘ under the crown, but such as had neither fortune
‘ nor interest in their country, in order that their
‘ friends might be in a condition to get themselves
‘ chosen members of this house; for, I believe, it
‘ will be granted, that no administration could
‘ support itself, or answer any of the ends of go-
‘ vernment, if the majority of this house consisted
‘ of such as were its declared enemies.

‘ From hence, Sir, I think it is evident, that
‘ if this bill should pass into a law, the necessary
‘ consequence would be, that in a very short time
‘ our armies would be entirely commanded by of-
‘ ficers of no fortune or interest in their country:
‘ Our navy would be in the same condition: All
‘ posts and offices under the crown would be
‘ filled with men of the same stamp; and in
‘ these circumstances, if an ambitious, or a hot,
‘ passionate Prince should succeed to the throne,
‘ I must desire gentlemen to consider, whether

‘ our constitution and liberties would not be in
‘ more danger, than they can ever be, as long as
‘ our army and fleet are commanded by officers,
‘ and all other considerable posts under the crown
‘ filled with gentlemen, of such fortune and inte-
‘ rest in their respective countries, as to be able to
‘ get themselves chosen members of this house.
‘ It has been generally admitted in this debate,
‘ that gentlemen of no fortunes will always be
‘ more ready to second the ambitious designs of a
‘ court, than gentlemen who have good fortunes
‘ of their own, the security of which must de-
‘ pend upon the preservation of our constitution ;
‘ and for this very reason, an ambitious or head-
‘ strong Prince can never have any great affection
‘ for Parliaments or Senates, constituted as those
‘ in this kingdom are. If the Prince could bring
‘ whom he pleased, and as many as he pleased
‘ into Parliament, and expel or turn out whom
‘ he pleased, as the *Roman* Emperors did with re-
‘ gard to their senates, the most ambitious and
‘ arbitrary Prince would have no great occasion to
‘ grow weary of Parliaments ; but as the King
‘ can bring no member into his house, nor expel
‘ any one ; as no gentleman can come into this
‘ house but by the free choice of his country, it
‘ must always consist of gentlemen of character
‘ and fortune, and consequently, will always be a
‘ restraint which an ambitious Prince will be glad
‘ to get rid of ; therefore, we have more reason
‘ to apprehend its being in the power of a Prince
‘ to govern without a Parliament, than its being
‘ in his power to govern or direct the Parlia-
‘ ment ; and, I am sure, when our armies and
‘ fleets are commanded by officers, and all other
‘ posts filled with gentlemen of no fortunes, it
‘ will be more easy for a Prince to govern with-
‘ out a Parliament, than it ever can be, as long as
‘ many of those officers and gentlemen are mem-
‘ bers of this house. ‘ Even

‘ Even the gentlemen who have spoke in fa-
‘ vour of this bill, are so sensible of the difficulty
‘ there will always be in obtaining the consent of
‘ gentlemen of character and fortune, to any
‘ thing that may look like an incroachment upon
‘ our constitution, that they seem to think, we
‘ are in no danger from the number of placemen
‘ and officers in this house, unless gentlemen of
‘ no character or fortune be brought here by
‘ the interest of the government, merely on ac-
‘ count of their having places or offices under the
‘ crown; and in order to magnify this danger,
‘ we have been told, that most of the little bo-
‘ roughs upon the coast, are entirely under the
‘ direction of the government, with regard to
‘ their elections, and that the little inland bo-
‘ roughs would have been in the same condition,
‘ if the late excise-scheme had passed into a law.
‘ Sir, I find gentlemen will not, upon this occa-
‘ sion, make that distinction, which, I think, is
‘ a very obvious one, between the circumstances
‘ of our government, when none but gentlemen
‘ of good families and fortunes are employed in
‘ its service, and the circumstances it would be in,
‘ if few or no such gentlemen would accept of
‘ being employed, which will always be the case,
‘ when it is pursuing measures that seem to be of
‘ dangerous consequence to the constitution, or
‘ inconsistent with the publick good. In the for-
‘ mer case, many of those employed in the govern-
‘ ment’s service will be returned for inland as well
‘ as coast boroughs, not because they are in the
‘ government’s service, but because they have a
‘ great natural interest in their respective countries.
‘ In the latter case, as all those gentlemen that had
‘ any natural interest would be against the govern-
‘ ment, it would be impossible for the government
‘ to get many of its low tools chosen, either for
‘ our boroughs upon the coast, or for our inland
‘ boroughs.

‘ boroughs. In this case, if the excise-scheme had
‘ passed into a law, it would have made no difference;
‘ for as long as our elections are free, those
‘ that have the best interest will always be chosen;
‘ and as the government’s interest must always depend
‘ upon the interest of those that are employed in its
‘ service, no excise-scheme, nor any such scheme can give
‘ an interest to a government that has no gentlemen of
‘ interest in its service. Therefore, as long as our elections
‘ are free, there is not the least danger, that any great
‘ number of gentlemen of no character or fortune can ever
‘ be brought into this house; and the freedom of our
‘ elections is already as fully secured as laws can secure it.

‘ I hope, Sir, I have now fully shewn, that our
‘ constitution and liberties can be in no danger from
‘ any number of placemen or officers in this house,
‘ unless we suppose, that a great number of gentlemen
‘ of family, fortune, character, and interest in their
‘ country, would chuse to make a sacrifice of themselves,
‘ their posterity, and their country, rather than risk
‘ losing the place or office they possess under the crown.
‘ This is a supposition which, I think, there never can be
‘ any ground for. If there were: If it were possible
‘ to suppose such a general and abandoned venality
‘ among the better sort of people of this kingdom,
‘ the bill would either have no effect, or a very bad
‘ one. Can we suppose that such venal and abandoned
‘ men would serve their country in Parliament for
‘ nothing? They would either set up a traffick with
‘ the crown for private pensions to themselves, or posts
‘ and preferments to their trustees or relations, which
‘ no laws nor oaths could discover or prevent; or
‘ otherwise they would form themselves into a party
‘ for overturning the administration; and thus one
‘ administration would be overturned after another, till
‘ at

‘ at last the country would become a prey to some
 ‘ foreign power, or until some one administration,
 ‘ more bold and artful than the former, should fall
 ‘ upon a method to establish themselves in arbitra-
 ‘ ry power. There is, therefore, no occasion for
 ‘ this bill; or if there is, it would either have no
 ‘ effect, or a very bad one; and this, I think, is
 ‘ a sufficient reason for my being against bringing
 ‘ it in.’

The next that rose up upon this occasion, was
 Sir *William Wyndham*, whose speech was in sub-
 stance thus:

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, The honourable gentleman who spoke last
 ‘ has told us, that questions in politicks admit of Sir William
 Wyndham's
 speech.
 ‘ no demonstration. In this I am intirely of his
 ‘ opinion, and, I think, this opinion was never
 ‘ more strongly confirmed, than by the debate of
 ‘ this day. There never was a question in this
 ‘ house, that could be brought nearer to a demon-
 ‘ stration, than the question now before us; and
 ‘ yet, I find, it is not possible to convince those
 ‘ that may be affected by its being agreed to. It
 ‘ has been hitherto reckoned a maxim in law,
 ‘ which I never before heard disputed, that parties
 ‘ ought not to be judges; but now I find this
 ‘ maxim denied, and, indeed, it must be so, by
 ‘ every gentleman that says, our constitution can
 ‘ never suffer by a majority of placemen in this
 ‘ house; for that placemen and officers of all kinds
 ‘ must be parties concerned in many cases, which
 ‘ we, as members of this house, must judge of,
 ‘ is so clear, that I should have been ashamed to
 ‘ have given you the trouble of proving it, if I
 ‘ had not heard the motion now before you so
 ‘ warmly opposed.

‘ Upon

‘ Upon this occasion, Sir, I must observe, that
‘ all free governments must consist of two distinct
‘ powers, the legislative, and the executive, the
‘ last of which is always subordinate, and subject
‘ to the review of the first. The very essence of
‘ a free government consists, among other things,
‘ in this, that all those who are entrusted with the
‘ executive power, shall be accountable for their
‘ conduct to the legislative power, and may be
‘ punished by the legislative power, which always
‘ consists in some sort of an assembly of the peo-
‘ ple, in case it be found that they have neglected
‘ or transgressed their duty in the execution of
‘ their office; for what benefit could the people
‘ reap from their having the power of making
‘ their own laws, if those who are intrusted with
‘ the executive power of the society, might, with-
‘ out fear or controul, betray or neglect the pub-
‘ lick affairs of the society, or injure and oppress
‘ individuals, either by neglecting to execute the
‘ laws, or by executing them in a different manner
‘ from what was intended, or by pretending to act
‘ according to law, without having any law for
‘ their authority?

‘ This, I say, Sir, is essential to every free go-
‘ vernment, and, accordingly, we have this regu-
‘ lation established by our frame of government in
‘ the most perfect manner. Those who are in-
‘ trusted with the executive power are all, or most
‘ of them, named by the King; but then every
‘ one of them, from the highest to the lowest, is
‘ accountable to, and may be punished by the two
‘ houses of Parliament; and it is particularly the
‘ business of this house, which is the grand inquest
‘ of the nation, to enquire into their conduct, and
‘ to impeach those we find guilty of any neglect or
‘ misdemeanour, in the exercise of that part of the
‘ executive power which is intrusted to them by
‘ the crown. Therefore, it is our duty to make
‘ frequent

‘ frequent inquiries into the conduct of every
‘ minister, officer, and placeman appointed by
‘ the crown; and upon all such inquiries, we
‘ are to examine strictly into their behaviour,
‘ and judge impartially of their conduct. From
‘ hence it appears, that in all such inquiries, and
‘ all questions relating to them, the members of
‘ this house, as such, are judges of the conduct
‘ and behaviour of every placeman, officer,
‘ or minister employed by the crown in the exe-
‘ cutive part of our government; and conse-
‘ quently, every placeman, officer, and minister,
‘ that has a seat in this assembly, must be both
‘ judge and party in many cases that ought to be
‘ brought before us.

‘ It signifies nothing to say, Sir, that no offi-
‘ cer can be a party concerned in the conduct of
‘ another officer, and that an officer who hap-
‘ pens to be a member of this house, must re-
‘ tire, as soon as any question arises relating to
‘ his own conduct; for as there are many and
‘ great connexions between different offices, and
‘ between officers of different offices, which may
‘ at first view appear entirely distinct, it is im-
‘ possible so much as to guess, when an inquiry,
‘ or any leading question to an inquiry, into the
‘ conduct of one office or officer is moved for,
‘ I say it is impossible to guess what other offi-
‘ cers may, upon the event of a strict inquiry,
‘ appear to have been confederates with him in
‘ his crimes. Nay, even those officers that ne-
‘ ver had any dealings with him, cannot know
‘ but that a close inquiry into one office, may
‘ bring to light, as it often does, some mal-
‘ practices of other offices, in which they them-
‘ selves have a concern; and therefore every of-
‘ ficer in the house will think himself a party
‘ concerned, in every inquiry that can be set on
‘ foot, and will, consequently, endeavour to pre-

' vent or defeat every such inquiry. To this I
 ' must add, that in all degrees and stations in
 ' life, we find, that men of the same trade, em-
 ' ployment, or profession, especially where their
 ' business does not interfere, conceive an affec-
 ' tion for one another, and are therefore apt to
 ' judge very partially in one another's favour ;
 ' from whence it must be concluded, that in eve-
 ' ry such inquiry, and every question that arises
 ' relating to any such, all ministers, placemen,
 ' and officers, are parties concerned, not only in
 ' interest, but affection ; and consequently, all
 ' those who have seats in this house, must, in all
 ' such cases, be both judges and parties, which
 ' is directly contrary to the established maxim I
 ' have mentioned.

' Whether it be owing to the great number of
 ' placemen and officers we have had for many
 ' years in this house, or whether it be owing to
 ' the integrity of those who have of late years
 ' been concerned in the executive part of our
 ' government, I do not know ; but I must ob-
 ' serve, that parliamentary inquiries into the
 ' management of offices, and conduct of offi-
 ' cers appointed by the crown, have of late years
 ' been very rare ; and yet, in order to keep all
 ' such officers to their good behaviour, I must be
 ' of opinion, that such inquiries ought to be
 ' frequently set on foot, and strictly carried on,
 ' though no direct complaint has been made a-
 ' gainst any one particular officer ; for a publick
 ' rumour is a sufficient ground for a parliamenta-
 ' ry inquiry, and no man can say, that such
 ' grounds have been wanting. But whatever
 ' may be the cause of our having lately had so
 ' few parliamentary inquiries, I will be bold to
 ' prophesy, that if there should ever be a majo-
 ' rity of placemen and officers in this house,
 ' we shall never afterwards have any more such
 ' inqui-

‘ inquiries, unless they be such as are set up at the
‘ instigation, and by the contrivance of ministers,
‘ in order to gain a little popularity, by throwing
‘ a scape-goat among the people. And if this
‘ should ever come to be our case, I am sure no
‘ man could with justice say, that we lived under
‘ a free government, or that our constitution re-
‘ mained entire.

‘ Thus, I think, Sir, the question now before
‘ us is brought as near a demonstration as any such
‘ question can possibly be. As members of this
‘ house, we are to inquire into, and judge of the
‘ conduct of ministers, officers, and placemen, in-
‘ trusted by the crown with the executive power
‘ of our government: As ministers, officers, and
‘ placemen, named by the crown, we are the per-
‘ sons whose conduct is to be inquired into. Is it
‘ not evident then, that these two characters are
‘ incompatible, unless we say, that parties may be
‘ judges? Sir, it is so evident, that I should be for
‘ excluding every minister, officer, and placeman,
‘ from having a seat in this house, were it not for
‘ the necessity we are under of having some of the
‘ chief amongst us, in order to give us proper in-
‘ formation with respect to the great offices they
‘ are at the head of. If this question admits of a
‘ variety of opinions, I am sure every question in
‘ politicks must, and therefore, great care should
‘ be taken, that those who are to judge of such
‘ questions, shall not be under the least bias; for
‘ the weight and efficacy of the bias will always
‘ increase, in proportion to the doubtfulness of the
‘ question; which is a new argument against ad-
‘ mitting placemen and officers into this house.

‘ We have been told, Sir, that it is impossible
‘ to suppose, that gentlemen of great fortune and
‘ interest in the country, will sacrifice the liberties
‘ of their country for the sake of a place they en-
‘ joy or expect. Sir, it is so far from being im-

‘ possible to suppose this, that it is a common case
‘ It has always been the case in every country
‘ where the liberties of the people have been sacri-
‘ ficed. The liberties of no country can be sacri-
‘ ficed, without the concurrence of many gentle-
‘ men of family, fortune and interest, and a cri-
‘ minal indolence or passivity in the rest. Some
‘ are led, contrary to the light of their own under-
‘ standings, by their avarice, vanity, luxury, or
‘ extravagance; others are deceived by specious
‘ pretences, and led into such measures, the cer-
‘ tain, though not the plain and direct consequen-
‘ ces of which, are slavery and arbitrary power.
‘ With the first sort of men, an honourable and
‘ profitable place affords them an immediate satis-
‘ faction for their avarice, or vanity, or an imme-
‘ diate supply for their luxury or extravagance,
‘ which they prefer to all other considerations.
‘ With the second sort of men, an honourable and
‘ profitable place gives them a bias to that side of
‘ the question upon which their place depends,
‘ and prevents their seeing through the specious
‘ pretences that are made use of for supporting
‘ that side of the question. And thus, between
‘ these two sorts of men, the liberties of any coun-
‘ try may probably be given up, if they are com-
‘ mitted to the keeping of those that have honour-
‘ able and profitable places, which depend upon
‘ their making the surrender.

‘ Let us consider, Sir, that even liberty itself is
‘ but a question in politicks. Whether a limited
‘ or an absolute monarchy be the best sort of go-
‘ vernment, is but a question in politicks; and
‘ therefore, as the honourable gentleman has said,
‘ can admit of no demonstration. For this reason,
‘ even those that are gentlemen of fortune and
‘ interest in their country, if they be in the least
‘ governed by avarice, vanity, luxury, or extra-
‘ vagance, may, by an honourable and profitable
‘ employment,

‘ employment, be induced not only to say and
‘ vote, but even to think, that an absolute monar-
‘ chy is the best sort of government, and that they
‘ do a signal service to their country, by sacrificing
‘ its liberties. Nay, this very doctrine has of late
‘ been supported in private conversation, even in
‘ this country, and by gentlemen of very great
‘ distinction. How natural then is it to suppose,
‘ that in political questions, where our liberties are
‘ not directly and immediately, but indirectly and
‘ consequentially concerned, a gentleman of dis-
‘ tinction may be induced, by an honourable and
‘ profitable employment, to approve of, or give
‘ his assent to the wrong side of the question?
‘ How natural is it to suppose, that the members
‘ of this house may, by such means, be induced
‘ to grant such revenues, such numbers of troops,
‘ and such powers and prerogatives to the crown,
‘ as may for ever after put it out of the power of
‘ Parliament to controul any of the King’s mea-
‘ sures, or to punish any of his officers, unless
‘ they be such as he may be pleased to throw out
‘ of his protection? And in this case, whatever
‘ forms of liberty we might have, I am sure it
‘ would be ridiculous to say we had any of the
‘ substance remaining.

‘ Thus, Sir, I think, it is evident almost to a
‘ demonstration, that our constitution and liber-
‘ ties not only may, but must be destroyed, un-
‘ less we shut the doors of this house against
‘ most placemen and officers, as we have already
‘ done against all pensioners; and as this is so
‘ evident, no objection that can be invented, no
‘ danger, no terror, we can be frightened with,
‘ shall prevent me from exerting all the power I
‘ have for its being done. Slavery to me is the
‘ highest of all terrors, and therefore, I shall be
‘ for guarding against it at the risk of any other
‘ terror that can be imagined. But I must say,

‘ that in this long debate, I have not heard one
‘ plausible objection made against this exclusion.
‘ To tell us, that a just and wise administration
‘ can have no friends of good fortune and in-
‘ terest in their several countries, but such as
‘ have places or offices under the crown, is some-
‘ thing very surprizing. If this were the case, I
‘ am sure it must be granted, that the places and
‘ offices under the crown are now become infi-
‘ nitely too numerous. But this, Sir, is not,
‘ nor ever can be the case. There are now in
‘ every county in *England*, one with another, two
‘ or three hundred gentlemen of family, for-
‘ tune and interest in their several countries, who
‘ have no places or offices under the crown, and
‘ who, under a just and wise administration,
‘ would be firm friends to it, and would be able
‘ to support it, in a legal way, against all the
‘ Jacobites, republicans, and discontented, that
‘ could in such a case be within the kingdom;
‘ and among such a number, could not the ad-
‘ ministration find one or two to stand as candi-
‘ dates upon their interest at every election with-
‘ in the county? They certainly might, and
‘ their candidates would have this advantage,
‘ that they would have the votes and interest of
‘ all those gentlemen of fortune within the county,
‘ who had places or offices under the crown, and
‘ could not therefore, themselves, stand as can-
‘ didates at any election. Therefore, should this
‘ bill pass into a law, no future administration
‘ would be under the necessity of employing
‘ none but men of low or desperate fortunes in
‘ any place or office under the crown; and, I am
‘ sure, no just or wise administration will ever
‘ chuse it.

‘ It has been said, Sir, that we ought not to
‘ make any alteration in our constitution without
‘ an apparent necessity; and that the alteration
‘ pro-

‘ proposed by this bill cannot appear necessary,
‘ unless we suppose such a venal and abandoned
‘ spirit to prevail in the nation, that most gen-
‘ tlemen of family and fortune amongst us,
‘ would be ready to sacrifice the liberties of their
‘ country, rather than risk losing a good post or
‘ employment under the crown. Sir, it is to
‘ prevent the growth of such a venal and aban-
‘ doned spirit, that this bill is intended. When
‘ the crown had but few lucrative posts to be-
‘ stow, the most abandoned administration could
‘ not contribute much to the growth of this spi-
‘ rit; but the crown has now such a number of
‘ lucrative posts to bestow, that if these posts
‘ should be applied to the purchase of a gentle-
‘ man’s vote in this house, or his interest at
‘ elections, such a spirit would soon prevail, and
‘ at last become universal. It would begin in
‘ this house: It would grow by example: One
‘ gentleman’s being corrupted would not only be
‘ an example, but it would give countenance to
‘ a second; he to a third, and so forth, till at
‘ last it would spread through the majority of
‘ this house. From this house it would descend
‘ to elections; for he that sells will purchase, if
‘ he can otherwise have nothing to sell. Begin,
‘ Sir, at the fountain: Clear that from corrup-
‘ tion, and the stream will soon run clear; for
‘ if members cannot sell votes in Parliament,
‘ they will never, or very seldom buy that com-
‘ modity at elections. Their vanity may some-
‘ times prompt them to do so, but this can hap-
‘ pen but seldom, and can never have any great
‘ effect.

‘ I shall not say, Sir, that placemen have ever
‘ approved or opposed questions in this house,
‘ because they were placemen, and for no
‘ other reason; but this I will say, that the
‘ majority of the nation thinks they have

‘ often done so; and I must observe, that ever
 ‘ since I sat in Parliament, our placemen have
 ‘ generally been of the same side with our mini-
 ‘ sters: If any of them dropt by chance into
 ‘ the other side of the question, they have of
 ‘ late years soon ceased to be placemen. Nay,
 ‘ even in this house, we have heard it delivered
 ‘ as a ministerial maxim, that no man ought to
 ‘ be allowed to keep his place under the crown,
 ‘ if he follows the directions of his conscience,
 ‘ and votes against any of the minister’s measures
 ‘ or jobbs in Parliament. This makes me think
 ‘ the bill the more necessary: The whole nation
 ‘ thinks so; and if this question should pass in
 ‘ the negative, the whole nation will think the
 ‘ bill more necessary than they ever thought it
 ‘ before. They will think it absolutely necessary
 ‘ to have such a bill, but now not possible to ob-
 ‘ tain it; which will of course raise such a dis-
 ‘ content, or perhaps disaffection, in the nation,
 ‘ as may be of dangerous consequence to the
 ‘ present establishment.

‘ It is really, Sir, most astonishing to hear it
 ‘ said, that the administration’s interest in the
 ‘ several little boroughs upon our coast, depends
 ‘ upon the natural interest of those that have
 ‘ places under the crown. This, I say, is most
 ‘ astonishing, considering how notoriously it is
 ‘ known to be otherwise. I shall grant, that if
 ‘ the interest made in the little boroughs by
 ‘ custom-house officers, excisemen, officers of
 ‘ dock-yards, and such like gentlemen, be a na-
 ‘ tural interest, a clerk of the treasury or admi-
 ‘ ralty may be said to have a great natural inte-
 ‘ rest in his borough; but as this interest de-
 ‘ pends upon his post, and not upon his family
 ‘ or fortune, I cannot call it a natural interest.
 ‘ Do not we know, Sir, that many of our little
 ‘ boroughs are already become so venal, so pub-
 ‘ lickly

‘ lickly venal, that their brokers, or rather their
 ‘ pimps, deal as openly for the sale of them, as
 ‘ bawds do for the sale of a prostitute? This
 ‘ infamous traffick I am for putting an end to;
 ‘ and as the bill now proposed will be of great
 ‘ service for this purpose, I shall be not only for
 ‘ bringing it in, but for having it passed into a
 ‘ law.’

The question being at last put, it was upon a
 division carried in the negative; noes 223, yeas
 207.

Thursday the 31st of January, William Pulteney,
Esq; stood up, and spoke in substance thus.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, It is with regret I observe, that almost
 ‘ every session introduces something new, in di-
 ‘ minution of the liberties, or derogatory to the
 ‘ constitution of this kingdom. In former times,
 ‘ the grant of a supply often stood a long de-
 ‘ bate in this house, and was sometimes abso-
 ‘ lutely refused; now it is always granted, *nemine*
 ‘ *contradicente*. The malt tax was never intro-
 ‘ duced till towards the latter end of King *Wil-*
 ‘ *liam*’s reign, and was at first most strenuously
 ‘ opposed: Nay, even during the war in Queen
 ‘ *Anne*’s time, it was often opposed, and was
 ‘ looked on as a tax so burdensome upon the
 ‘ poor labourers and manufacturers of this king-
 ‘ dom, that no man imagined any minister would
 ‘ have the assurance to propose renewing or con-
 ‘ tinuing it, after the war was over: Even our
 ‘ neighbours of *Scotland* thought themselves so
 ‘ sure of this, that by the articles of Union they
 ‘ stipulated to be free from this tax only during
 ‘ the war; but they, as well as we, have since
 ‘ found ourselves mistaken: This grievous tax
 ‘ has

Mr. Pul-
 teney’s speech
 and motion
 for a call.

‘ has been continued to this day, and is now, in
‘ some measure, become a motion of course.
‘ The mutiny bill was at first thought to be a
‘ most dangerous innovation, and was therefore
‘ most violently opposed, especially in time of
‘ peace; but it is now become so familiar to us,
‘ that we pass it regularly every year, without
‘ the least opposition, as if a standing army and
‘ a mutiny act were two things absolutely neces-
‘ sary for the subsistence of our constitution.
‘ Not many years ago, the members of this
‘ house, when assembled, looked upon them-
‘ selves as the grand inquest of the nation, and
‘ therefore thought themselves in duty bound to
‘ inquire into every grievance and complaint,
‘ without any other foundation than a publick
‘ rumour; but now every motion, that tends to
‘ an inquiry into any complaint, is rejected; or
‘ if any such inquiry be ever set on foot, it is
‘ committed to those who are themselves sus-
‘ pected of being the original and chief cause of
‘ the complaint.

‘ Thus, Sir, we have for several years gone
‘ on approaching, I’m afraid, to the confines of
‘ slavery; and in this session we have made a
‘ new and a very extraordinary step. Till this
‘ session it was always thought, that every mem-
‘ ber of this house had a right to move for a
‘ call of the house. We are fellow-labourers
‘ for the publick good: We are all joint guar-
‘ dians of the liberties of our country; and
‘ every member has a right to insist upon it, that
‘ his companion should attend and bear an equal
‘ share of the burden, or at least a share propor-
‘ tionable to his strength and capacity. But in
‘ this session, Sir, we have seen a motion for a
‘ call rejected, though that motion was the first
‘ of the kind that had been made, though it
‘ was supported by strong reasons, and though it
‘ was

‘ was desired by near one half of those that were
‘ then present. This I must look on as a most
‘ dangerous innoyation; for when we begin to
‘ incroach upon, or derogate from our own
‘ rights, no man can tell how far it may go: I
‘ do not know, but I may live to see the ques-
‘ tion put upon a gentleman’s rising up to speak,
‘ whether he shall have leave to speak? And if
‘ ever such a question should be put, I shall not
‘ in the least doubt of its being carried in the
‘ negative, in case there should be a suspicion of
‘ the gentleman’s intending to utter things disa-
‘ greeable to those that may then have the di-
‘ rection of the majority of this house.

‘ For this reason, Sir, I was extremely sorry
‘ when I saw the question put upon such a mo-
‘ tion, and still more sorry when I saw that
‘ question carried in the negative; and if I were
‘ not fully convinced, that there were then se-
‘ veral objections to the motion, which do not
‘ now subsist, I should take care not to lay a
‘ foundation for another precedent of the same
‘ nature. But as the most material objections
‘ are now removed, I believe, I may venture to
‘ move again for a call of the house; and as I
‘ am under great concern for the success of my
‘ motion, I shall beg leave to explain some of
‘ those objections which do not now subsist.

‘ For this purpose, Sir, I must take notice,
‘ that if the last motion for a call had been com-
‘ plied with, the country gentlemen who have
‘ no place or office under the crown, and are
‘ therefore under no obligation, but that of con-
‘ science, to attend the service of this house, un-
‘ less we force them to it by a call, would have
‘ found themselves under a necessity of keeping
‘ their *Christmas* in town, instead of keeping it in
‘ the country; and I must farther take notice,
‘ that according to my observation, every gentle-
‘ man

‘ man in this house that has, or is suspected of
 ‘ having a post, office, or pension from the
 ‘ crown, gave his negative to that motion. Now,
 ‘ I hope, they will give me leave to suppose,
 ‘ which very few others will do, that their giving
 ‘ this negative proceeded from the great regard
 ‘ they have for the poor people in the country.
 ‘ By the nature of their place or office, they are
 ‘ obliged to attend punctually the business of this
 ‘ house, and to reside, for the greatest part of
 ‘ the year, perhaps the greatest part of the seven
 ‘ years, in this great city. By this means the
 ‘ poor in the country are deprived of that hospi-
 ‘ tality, which they so generously, and so chari-
 ‘ tably keep, when an election, or some such oc-
 ‘ casion, calls upon them to visit their constitu-
 ‘ ents; and in order to atone, as far as they
 ‘ could, for the loss the poor suffer by their ab-
 ‘ sence, they were unwilling to draw away from
 ‘ the country any of those gentlemen who might,
 ‘ and were inclined to keep their *Christmas* there.
 ‘ But as *Christmas* is now over, this reason no
 ‘ longer subsists; therefore I now hope to have
 ‘ the concurrence of many of those gentlemen
 ‘ who voted against the last motion for a call;
 ‘ and I wish for it the more ardently, because, I
 ‘ expect no success unless I have the concurrence,
 ‘ or at least the connivance of some of them.

‘ Another objection, Sir, that does not now
 ‘ subsist, is that which was removed the very last
 ‘ day of our meeting together in this house: I
 ‘ mean the motion for leave to bring in a bill,
 ‘ for the better securing the freedom of Parlia-
 ‘ ments, by limiting the number of officers to sit
 ‘ in the house of Commons. This bill, if it
 ‘ should pass into a law, would certainly exclude
 ‘ many gentlemen who have now the honour of
 ‘ having seats in this house: At least it would
 ‘ render them incapable of being chosen members
 ‘ of

‘ of a new Parliament, unless they should resign
‘ the offices they now enjoy. I have so good an
‘ opinion of the officers and other placemen, who
‘ are now in this house, that every one of them
‘ would, I believe, give it his concurrence, not-
‘ withstanding the private disadvantage it would
‘ be to him, if he thought the passing of such a
‘ bill absolutely necessary for the preservation of
‘ our constitution ; but, I hope, they will pardon
‘ me if I think, that their private interest pre-
‘ vents their seeing the publick necessity ; for in
‘ this, my opinion is confirmed, by their unani-
‘ mously joining to put a negative upon the very
‘ motion for leave to bring in such a bill. Now
‘ when the last motion for a call was made, it
‘ was strongly suspected, nay it was, I dare say,
‘ by most of them firmly believed, that there
‘ would be some such motion soon after the
‘ *Christmas* holy-days ; and as most of the coun-
‘ try gentlemen that were then absent, have upon
‘ former occasions appeared to be friends to every
‘ such proposition, it was the business of those
‘ that were against it, to prevent their being
‘ brought up to town, till after that motion was
‘ over, in order that the motion might appear to
‘ have as few friends in this house as possible,
‘ especially considering the vast majority of friends
‘ the bill appears to have in every other part of
‘ the kingdom.

‘ This, Sir, was, I believe, the most material
‘ objection against a call when the motion was last
‘ made, which I am the rather induced to believe,
‘ because I observed that most, if not every one
‘ of those that appeared against the call, appeared
‘ likewise against the motion for this bill ; and in
‘ this I must allow they acted like good generals ;
‘ for when a general expects to be attacked, it is
‘ certainly his business, if possible, to prevent
‘ the enemy’s being able to assemble all their
‘ forces

‘ forces together, especially when he can do it
‘ without dispersing or losing the assistance of any
‘ of his own troops. But as this attack is now
‘ over: As they can be afraid of no future attack
‘ in this session of Parliament, I hope, they will
‘ allow us to have the authority of this house,
‘ for compelling the attendance of those members,
‘ who can by no other means be compelled to at-
‘ tend their duty, in the execution of that trust
‘ which they have accepted of from their coun-
‘ try. Therefore I cannot think, that even the
‘ honourable gentleman near me, will now be
‘ against a call, unless he be, on his part, medi-
‘ tating some new attack. To have the house
‘ called over once at least in a session, is in itself
‘ so reasonable, and has been so constantly prac-
‘ tised, that I shall expect even his concurrence,
‘ unless he has something in *petto*, which he
‘ thinks will suit best with a thin assembly; and
‘ if, by giving his negative to this question, he
‘ declares he has, I hope it will have the same
‘ effect with a call: I hope it will bring every ab-
‘ sent member to town, that has the least regard
‘ for the liberties of his country.

‘ After having thus shewn, Sir, that those
‘ reasons, which induced many gentlemen to be
‘ against the last motion for a call, do not now
‘ subsist; if I knew any reason still subsisting
‘ against it, I would endeavour to state and an-
‘ swer it; but I cannot really suggest to myself
‘ the least shadow of a reason now subsisting
‘ against it, except that which I have mentioned,
‘ and which, in the opinion of most gentlemen
‘ present, will, I hope, be a prevailing argument
‘ in its favour. I say, Sir, I cannot suggest to
‘ myself the least shadow of a reason against
‘ what I am to propose; for surely gentlemen
‘ are not in earnest when they say, that because
‘ many gentlemen absented themselves from the
‘ house

‘ house last session, after being convinced that
‘ their presence could be of no service to their coun-
‘ try, therefore no gentleman ought to be com-
‘ pelled, during this session, to give his attendance.
‘ This may be a foundation for some gentlemens
‘ shewing us how great masters they are of wit
‘ and humour (as they did upon the last motion
‘ for a call) but it can never be a foundation for a
‘ serious argument. And I must observe, that
‘ however witty those gentlemen may be upon
‘ the secession, as they are pleased to call it, it
‘ had a very good effect. I am convinced, the
‘ gentlemen that retired from the house, did
‘ more service to their country by retiring, than
‘ they could have done by continuing in their
‘ seats. They saw they could not by their pre-
‘ sence prevent or alter the destructive, pacifick
‘ humour some gentlemen were then in; and
‘ therefore they resolved to try what they could
‘ do by their absence. Accordingly it had the
‘ desired effect: It made us resolve to vindicate
‘ our honour and our rights by arms, since we
‘ saw we could not do it by fair means; and if
‘ the war be but tolerably conducted, it will,
‘ with the assistance of Providence, contribute as
‘ much to the glory and advantage of this nation,
‘ as any war we were ever engaged in.

‘ As this change of measures removed the
‘ cause which gentlemen had to absent themselves
‘ from the house, most of them have now return-
‘ ed, because, if we are really resolved to prosecute
‘ the war with vigour, their attendance here may
‘ be of some service to their country. Those who
‘ are now absent have no reason of a publick na-
‘ ture for their absence; and I am for having the
‘ house called over, in order to see, whether any,
‘ and which of them, may have a good reason of
‘ a private nature; for surely they ought to be
‘ here, if they have no good reason of any kind
‘ for

‘ for being absent. Not only the constant custom
‘ of Parliament, but many cogent reasons of a
‘ particular nature at this time plead in favour of
‘ what I propose, and there is not the least shadow
‘ of reason against it; even those who have been
‘ for many years the constant and unvariable
‘ friends of the administration, can now have no
‘ objection to it; and, if a negative be put upon
‘ it, merely out of a wantonness of power, it may
‘ again afford a good reason of a publick nature,
‘ not only for those that are absent to continue so,
‘ but for many of those that are present, to retire
‘ a second time; for when things are carried in
‘ this house without any reason, by what I must,
‘ in such a case, call an unreasonable majority,
‘ those who are governed by their reason have no
‘ business here, because their attendance can be of
‘ no service to their country, and may throw a
‘ blemish upon their characters: As the custom of
‘ this house does not allow of protesting, or enter-
‘ ing our dissent upon the journals, when destruc-
‘ tive measures are pursued, and authorized or ap-
‘ proved by this house, neither the present genera-
‘ tion, nor posterity, can distinguish who were for
‘ or against that authority or approbation; and
‘ therefore, the only method gentlemen have for
‘ vindicating their characters, is to retire from an
‘ assembly, where their presence may give counte-
‘ nance to resolutions which their negative cannot
‘ prevent, nor their conscience approve.

‘ This sort of absence, Sir, is what even an ad-
‘ ministration ought to prevent, or put an end to
‘ as soon as possible, because it can never happen
‘ but when such questions are carried, as are con-
‘ demned by a great majority of the nation. The
‘ present administration have wisely taken care to
‘ remove the cause of many gentlemens absenting
‘ themselves from the house last session, by giving
‘ them, as well as the nation, the satisfaction they
‘ desired;

desired; and the best method they can take for preventing the like in time to come, is to put always a greater confidence in their arguments than in their numbers. I hope they will do so upon the present occasion, and therefore I shall beg leave to state some of those arguments in favour of my motion, which proceed from the critical situation our affairs are in at present. Let us consider, Sir, we are now engaged in a war, which is already expensive, and may become dangerous. We have it from a great authority, That in a multitude of counsellors there is safety; and as we, in this house, may assist his Majesty not only with our purses, but also with our advice, therefore, the more numerous and full our assembly is, the better advice we may give, the more weight, I am sure, it will have, both abroad and at home. The resolutions of a full house will add great weight to all his Majesty's negotiations abroad, and encourage foreign powers to enter into alliances with us. But a little while ago we were told by an honourable gentleman, whose veracity cannot be questioned, and whose knowledge may be depended on, that we had not one ally in the universe. In the present war we have, as yet, no occasion for an ally; we can have no occasion for an ally, unless our enemies should get some very powerful allies to assist them. The resolutions of a full house of Commons will shew the spirit of the nation, and may thereby, very probably, prevent our enemies getting any such assistance; or if they should, those resolutions may enable his Majesty to form a confederacy upon the continent of *Europe*, which may give our present enemies and their future allies so much to do at land, as may disable them from giving us any opposition at sea, or in any part of the *West-Indies*: Whereas, if it be observed by foreign powers, as it certainly will,

VOL. XIX. Q that

‘ that there is but a small number of members in
‘ this house, and that the friends of the administra-
‘ tion have, by a most extraordinary and unprece-
‘ dented negative, prevented an increase of that
‘ number, they will either conclude, that the pre-
‘ sent war is not a national, but a ministerial war,
‘ which, I am sure, is far from being the case; or
‘ they will conclude, that our ministers have en-
‘ tered into the war, only to amuse the people,
‘ and that they have not a mind to prosecute it in
‘ such a manner as to give satisfaction to the na-
‘ tion; either of which conclusions will not only
‘ discourage those that incline to give us assistance,
‘ but encourage those that incline to give assistance
‘ to our enemies.

‘ Thus it appears, Sir, that with regard to our
‘ affairs abroad, it is absolutely necessary to have
‘ a full house; and with regard to our affairs at
‘ home, it is still more necessary. Let us consider,
‘ Sir, that in this war, and, indeed, in every war
‘ we can be engaged in, we ought to take all the
‘ methods we can think of, for giving satisfaction
‘ to those that contribute towards the expence of
‘ the war, and spirit to those that carry it on.
‘ The people will pay their taxes with pleasure,
‘ when they find they are granted by a full house;
‘ because they will suppose that no larger sums are
‘ granted, than are necessary; and that every shil-
‘ ling they pay, will be applied, with the greatest
‘ œconomy, to the publick service. Then, with
‘ regard to those that are, or may be employed in
‘ any of our warlike operations, there is nothing
‘ gives greater spirit and confidence to those that
‘ fight either by sea or land, than their being con-
‘ vinced, that they are directed in every thing
‘ they undertake by wise counsels, and command-
‘ ed by brave and experienced officers. This,
‘ both our foldiers and sailors will believe, when
‘ they find that all our measures are advised and
‘ comptrolled

‘ controlled by a full house of Commons: They
‘ will suppose those ministers to be wise, vigilant,
‘ and careful, that are willing upon all occasions,
‘ and in every step, to submit their conduct to the
‘ review of a full and free house of Parliament:
‘ This will inspire every soldier with a confidence
‘ of success, and this confidence will always be al-
‘ most an infallible means to secure it.

‘ On the other hand, Sir, if this house be not
‘ near full, especially if its being so be prevented
‘ by those that are the known friends of the ad-
‘ ministration, what must the consequence be?
‘ Does not every one know, that those who are in
‘ any post or employment under the crown must
‘ attend upon the private call of the minister, but
‘ that those who are under no such influence, de-
‘ pend only upon the publick call of the house?
‘ Does not every one know, that the former will
‘ be made use of whenever the minister thinks he
‘ has occasion for it; and will not every one sup-
‘ pose, that he prevents the latter, because he is
‘ afraid of having his conduct inquired into or di-
‘ rected, by a full and free representative of the na-
‘ tion? From hence every man must naturally
‘ conclude, that his conduct is either weak or
‘ wicked, or perhaps both; and this will of course
‘ raise an universal dissatisfaction among the peo-
‘ ple, and a general diffidence among our soldiers
‘ and sailors. This dissatisfaction may expose us
‘ to a real danger of being invaded, and this diffi-
‘ dence may render it impossible for us to prevent
‘ or oppose that invasion.

‘ The present situation of our affairs, therefore,
‘ both at home and abroad, particularly require a
‘ full house; and besides this, Sir, we have now
‘ under our consideration some affairs of the ut-
‘ most importance to this nation. We have alrea-
‘ dy ordered a bill to be brought in for registering
‘ seamen: What sort of one it may be, I do not

‘ as yet know ; but it is an affair in which the li-
‘ berties and well-being of one of the most nume-
‘ rous and useful bodies of men in the kingdom
‘ are deeply concerned ; and therefore, I am sure,
‘ it highly deserves to be considered in a full house.
‘ It is really, in my opinion, an affair of such con-
‘ sequence, that I should think the very rumour of
‘ our being to have such an affair soon before us,
‘ would render a call unnecessary. It certainly
‘ would do so, if gentlemen were properly touch-
‘ ed with what may so sensibly affect the happiness
‘ and prosperity of their country ; but the question
‘ that was before us the very last day we met here,
‘ convinces me, that nothing but a call can force
‘ some gentlemen to attend the service of their
‘ country in this assembly. In that question the
‘ preservation, the very being of our constitution
‘ was concerned, and yet there were not much a-
‘ bove two thirds of our number present, which
‘ was, perhaps, the occasion of a negative’s being
‘ put upon the question ; for I must observe, that,
‘ of those who were for that negative, there were,
‘ at least, two thirds that possessed places or offices
‘ under the crown, and were consequently, from
‘ their private interest, engaged to have a negative
‘ put upon that question. I am far from saying,
‘ that any one of them was governed by such a
‘ motive, because in all affairs of a publick nature,
‘ I believe, they never have the least regard to
‘ their private interest ; but, if it could be supposed,
‘ that any member of this house were governed
‘ by his private interest, it must be allowed, that
‘ such a member would never vote for excluding
‘ himself from having a seat or voice in this assem-
‘ bly, till after he had resigned the lucrative post
‘ or office he enjoyed under the crown.

‘ This late experience, Sir, has convinced me,
‘ that nothing but a call can bring up the members
‘ that are now absent ; and, as it has been the
‘ constant

‘ constant custom to call over the house, at least
 ‘ once in a session, as there are many strong reasons
 ‘ of a particular nature now for it, as there is not
 ‘ the least shadow of a reason against it, I hope it
 ‘ will be complied with; therefore, I shall conclude
 ‘ with moving, That this house be called over
 ‘ upon this day three weeks, being the 21st of
 ‘ *February* next.’

The next speech we shall give upon this occasion, was that made by *Robert Tracy*, Esq; who spoke to this effect, *viz.*

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, I shall agree with the honourable gentleman who made you this motion, that the secession which happen’d last session of Parliament, was the cause of our changing our measures; but I differ widely from him as to the manner in which that cause produced its effect. He seems to think, it had an effect upon the court of *Great Britain*, and was the immediate cause of our giving over to negotiate, and beginning to fight with *Spain*; whereas, I think, it had not the least effect upon our court, but had an immediate effect upon the court of *Spain*, and was the only cause of that court’s refusing to comply with any one thing that was stipulated by the convention. I am persuaded, the *Spanish* minister here thought the secession of so extraordinary and dangerous a nature, that our ministers would submit to any usage from *Spain*, rather than declare war whilst the nation was in a condition so distracted and forlorn: Nay, I do not know but that he was confirmed in this opinion, by some amongst ourselves without doors; and an account of this secession, with his opinion upon it, being transmitted by him to the court of *Spain*, they gave entire credit to his accounts, and placed an im-

Mr. Tracy’s
speech.

' plicit faith in his opinion, which was the cause
 ' of their obstinacy, and their obstinacy was the
 ' cause, and a most just cause too, for our court's
 ' altering its measures. Thus the secession was
 ' the cause, but not the immediate cause of our
 ' beginning hostilities against *Spain*. When that
 ' memorable event happened, we were in a
 ' course of negotiation: Even *Spain* itself seem-
 ' ed inclined to do us justice; but that event
 ' put an end to their peaceable inclinations, and
 ' this of course put an end to ours.

' From hence, I think, Sir, it is at least high-
 ' ly probable, that the war we are now engaged
 ' in, was chiefly owing to the secession; and
 ' when gentlemen consider this, however confi-
 ' dent they may at any time think themselves of
 ' being in the right, notwithstanding the major-
 ' ity's being of a different opinion, I hope they
 ' will be cautious of ever leaving the house in a
 ' body, as many of them did at that time; be-
 ' cause it can never be of any service, and may
 ' be of great prejudice to their country. The
 ' only precedent I can think of for such a me-
 ' thod of proceeding, is that which happened in
 ' the long Parliament in King *Charles I*'s reign;
 ' and the consequences that ensued at that time,
 ' cannot, I am sure, give encouragement to any
 ' man to follow the example. The misfortunes
 ' and the melancholy catastrophe of that reign,
 ' and the tyranny that was afterwards set up,
 ' ought to be a warning to gentlemen, not to
 ' desert the service of their country in this house,
 ' even though many things be agreed to by the
 ' majority, which they think inconsistent with
 ' the interest of their country. At least, they
 ' ought not to leave the house, unless their at-
 ' tendance here be absolutely inconsistent with
 ' the safety of their lives, which was the case of
 ' many members at that time.

‘ But, Sir, when gentlemen retire voluntarily,
‘ and as it were in a pet, they can expect no ex-
‘ cuse from their country, and, I am sure, they
‘ deserve no favour from those that continue in
‘ their duty. Suppose some of these pettish se-
‘ ceders should, in a little time, reason them-
‘ selves out of their pet, and should return to
‘ their duty in this house, could they, with any
‘ countenance desire, that the house should do
‘ them the favour to compel the attendance of
‘ their companions? If they did, ought it not
‘ to be supposed, that they did it for no other
‘ reason, but that their return might be as con-
‘ spicuous as their secession? This, Sir, I take
‘ to be the very case at present: A number of
‘ gentlemen retired last session from the service
‘ of their country in this house, I must suppose
‘ in a pet, because I can assign no other reason:
‘ Many of them have this session returned, but
‘ some have not; and now those that have re-
‘ turned, desire the favour of us, to call the
‘ house over, in order to force the rest to return
‘ to their duty. I say, Sir, they desire the fa-
‘ vour; for a call is a favour granted by the
‘ house to those that desire it. It is not a right
‘ that every member may insist on. Every mem-
‘ ber has a right to move for it; but a question
‘ is always to be put upon that motion, and it is
‘ never complied with, unless agreed to by the
‘ majority. A call is therefore very different
‘ from the right every member has to be heard;
‘ for when a member rises up to speak, I be-
‘ lieve, it was never yet put to the question,
‘ whether or no he should have leave to speak.

‘ The motion now before us is therefore a fa-
‘ vour, which the honourable gentleman that
‘ made it desires of us, and every gentleman
‘ has a right to consider whether it ought to be
‘ granted, and to refuse it, if he thinks it un-

reasonable. I am one of those that think it unreasonable, and shall therefore be against granting it. We gave those that are returned, leisure to cool of the pettish humour they had fallen into last session: I think it was right to do so, and with regard to most of them, it has had a proper effect: If there are any of them that are not as yet grown cool, and therefore continue in the country, I am for leaving them still there. The country, we know, is a proper place for reflexion and consideration; and no cure is so good for a pettish humour, as cool reasoning and mature deliberation. If we should force them out of their country retirement, they will, probably, oppose every thing we do; and it is not so much the numbers, as the unanimity of those that are here, that gives credit to the nation, or weight to his Majesty's negotiations at foreign courts. Even at home, the divisions among the people without doors, are generally owing to the divisions among those within; and when the divisions among those within appear to be near equal, they often occasion what approaches very near to sedition, among those that are without. We seem now to be pretty unanimous, at least with regard to our foreign affairs. Even those who have this session returned to their seats in this house, seem willing to agree to every thing that may contribute to a vigorous prosecution of the war; and no wonder they should be so; for they cannot well refuse to contribute all in their power to the vigorous prosecution of that war, which they themselves were, as I have shewn, the remote authors of. This unanimity will shew our enemies what they are to expect; and, by destroying their hopes of being able to hurt us, or defend themselves, will of course render them inclinable to agree to
reason-

‘ reasonable terms, which must necessarily bring
‘ the war to a happy and speedy issue ; therefore,
‘ we ought to do nothing that may, in the least,
‘ interrupt that unanimity which now so happily
‘ prevails amongst us.

‘ Besides, Sir, the honourable gentleman who
‘ made you this motion, has himself, I think,
‘ given you a very good reason for not agreeing
‘ to it. In giving a reason for the secession last
‘ year, he told us, that gentlemen may some-
‘ times, for the sake of conscience, and for pre-
‘ serving their characters, be obliged to leave
‘ the house : He even seemed to intimate, that
‘ this was the cause of gentlemens leaving the
‘ house last session : Now, if some of those gen-
‘ tlemen have got over this scruple of conscience,
‘ how do they know that all the rest have ? We
‘ must naturally, or at least charitably, I think,
‘ suppose, that those who have not returned,
‘ have not as yet got over this scruple of con-
‘ science ; and as I shall always be against put-
‘ ting any sort of force upon a scrupulous and
‘ tender conscience, I must be against compelling
‘ the attendance of such gentlemen in this house.
‘ I am far from finding fault with any of those
‘ gentlemen that have returned : I think they
‘ have done their duty in doing so ; but I cannot
‘ help comparing them to the present King of
‘ *Spain*. He, some years ago, resigned his crown,
‘ out of a pet, and, I think, it was a religious
‘ or conscientious pet too. I wish they had done
‘ with him, as the subjects of a near ally of his
‘ since did : I wish they had held him at his
‘ word, and never allowed him to resume, as
‘ they might and ought to have done ; for his
‘ second son, now Prince of *Asturias*, was the
‘ natural successor to his eldest, who died King
‘ of *Spain*. But they allowed him to resume his
‘ crown ; and we know what disturbances he has
‘ since

‘ since bred in *Europe*. If the gentlemen who
‘ left their seats last session, had been taken at
‘ their word : If we had ordered their seats to be
‘ filled up by new elections, they could have
‘ complained of no injustice. But we have this
‘ session allowed such of them as have returned,
‘ to resume their seats. In this we have shewn
‘ ourselves to be as indulgent as the subjects of
‘ the King of *Spain* ; and, I hope, they will
‘ take care not to make such an use of the indul-
‘ gence they have met with, as his Catholick
‘ Majesty has done. They have hitherto shewn,
‘ that they do not incline to do so ; but, if we
‘ should call in those that, for ought we know,
‘ are still in a bad humour, I do not know what
‘ might happen. Evil company, they say, cor-
‘ rupts good manners. It is a dangerous experi-
‘ ment to mingle the infected with those that
‘ are but just recovered. For this reason, I was
‘ against the call, when it was last proposed ; and
‘ as this reason still subsists, I am still against
‘ it.

‘ There was no true reason, Sir, for being
‘ against the call, when it was last proposed, but
‘ what still subsists in its full force. Every one
‘ must be sensible, that the honourable gentle-
‘ man was not serious in the reasons he assigned,
‘ and which, he said, are not now subsisting.
‘ However merry he may make himself upon
‘ this occasion, and we are all sensible of his su-
‘ perior talent in that way, I shall always think,
‘ that gentlemen are more usefully employed in
‘ entertaining their neighbours in the country,
‘ than in opposing every necessary measure of
‘ government in this house ; and therefore, I
‘ shall always be against compelling any man to
‘ come here, who, by his former conduct, has
‘ given me reason to suspect, that when he is
‘ here, he will certainly do so. As for the ques-
‘ tion

‘ tion that was before us the last time of our
‘ meeting here, which was but the day before
‘ yesterday, I shall never be afraid of its being
‘ considered in a house full of members, that are
‘ free from the prejudices of passion and interest.
‘ The reasons against the question are so many
‘ and so powerful, and the reasons for it so few
‘ and so weak, that, in such a house, I do not
‘ in the least doubt of its meeting always with
‘ the same fate, and that the more full the house
‘ is, the greater the majority will be that ap-
‘ pears against it.

‘ This therefore could be no reason, Sir, for
‘ any gentleman’s being against a call, the last
‘ time it was moved. With me, I am sure, it
‘ would rather have been a reason for my being
‘ for a call; because, though some of those that
‘ are absent would perhaps have voted in favour
‘ of that question, I am convinced many more
‘ of them would have voted against it. My
‘ chief reason for being then against a call was,
‘ as I have said, because I was against our doing
‘ any thing that might interrupt or lessen that
‘ unanimity in this house, which, with pleasure,
‘ I observe, in every thing that relates to a vigo-
‘ rous prosecution of the war; and as this rea-
‘ son against a call is now as strong as it was at
‘ that time, I must therefore be against agreeing
‘ to the honourable gentleman’s motion.’

The next that stood up was *George Lyttleton*, Esq; the purport of whose speech was thus.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, The secession, as it is called, which
‘ happened upon a very remarkable occasion last
‘ session, is a point that cannot be reasoned upon
‘ here; and therefore, I shall make no applica-
‘ tion of what I am going to say. I have heard,

*Mr. Lyttle-
ton’s speech.*

‘ Sir,

‘ Sir, of physicians taking their leave of a sick
 ‘ house, when they thought they could do no
 ‘ good there, and were not over-greedy of fees ;
 ‘ for some are so keen after fees, that they would
 ‘ stay and prescribe to a dead body. But I have
 ‘ heard of others, of a more generous character,
 ‘ refusing to continue their attendance, when
 ‘ they feared it was of no benefit, and yet re-
 ‘ turning again upon being called to a new con-
 ‘ sultation, when better symptoms appeared, and
 ‘ greater hopes of a recovery, to offer, at least,
 ‘ the proper remedy, whether it should be taken
 ‘ or not.’

Upon this, *Horace Walpole*, Esq; stood up, and
 spoke in substance as follows, viz.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Wal-
 pole's speech.

‘ Sir, The motion now under our considera-
 ‘ tion, is a matter of such indifference to me,
 ‘ that I am perfectly easy whether you agree to
 ‘ it or not. I shall grant that it is very usual to
 ‘ call the house over, at least, once in a session ;
 ‘ but, I could never observe, that it was of any
 ‘ advantage to the publick, and it is often of
 ‘ great inconvenience to private gentlemen, who
 ‘ have the honour, in this case I may say, the
 ‘ misfortune, to have a seat in this house. I take
 ‘ it for granted, that every gentleman who has
 ‘ any thing to offer for the service of his coun-
 ‘ try or constituents, or who thinks he has any
 ‘ thing to guard against that may be of prejudice
 ‘ to either, will attend duly in his place ; and,
 ‘ I cannot think, there is any great necessity for
 ‘ a gentleman's being here, who thinks his ab-
 ‘ sence can do no harm, nor his presence any
 ‘ good. But, when the house is ordered to be
 ‘ called over, with the usual *certiorari*, that all
 ‘ those who do not then attend, shall be taken
 ‘ into

‘ into custody, no gentleman can be sure, that
‘ his excuse will be admitted, and therefore ma-
‘ ny think themselves obliged to attend, though
‘ their attendance can be of no service, at that
‘ time, to the publick, and may be of great
‘ prejudice to them in their private affairs.

‘ From this consideration, Sir, I have always
‘ been of opinion, that a call of the house is
‘ neither necessary, nor ought to be made so of-
‘ ten as it is; and since, in the last session, we
‘ indulged a great many with the privilege of
‘ being absent, though, we knew, they had no
‘ excuse, I think those that are now absent have
‘ reason to expect, at least, from them, the same
‘ indulgence. I shall not find fault, Sir, with
‘ the privilege gentlemen took to themselves
‘ upon that occasion: Whatever was their pre-
‘ tence, they soon found their absence condemned
‘ by the whole nation, and, I believe, they have
‘ since heartily repented of what they did, which
‘ makes me, and I hope, it has made their se-
‘ veral constituents, ready to forgive them. But
‘ I cannot forbear taking notice, that the obser-
‘ vation made by the honourable gentleman who
‘ spoke last, puts me in mind of a merry passage
‘ in a *French* play, where a gentleman asks a ser-
‘ vant, how her master does? In a fair way of
‘ doing well, Sir, says she, for his physicians
‘ have just taken their leave of him.

‘ Now, Sir, to apply this to what happened
‘ last session: I must observe, that after our po-
‘ litical physicians had taken their leave of the
‘ house, as some of them did in a very solemn
‘ manner, things went better than they had done
‘ for a great while before. Several laws were
‘ passed, which gave great satisfaction to the
‘ people; every thing was carried on with great
‘ concord and unanimity; and to the joy of our
‘ friends, and disappointment of our enemies

‘ both at home and abroad, the nation soon ap-
 ‘ peared in perfect health and full vigour. Among
 ‘ several good laws pass’d in that interval, I can-
 ‘ not but take notice of the *Act for granting a*
 ‘ *liberty to carry sugars of the growth, or manu-*
 ‘ *facture of any of his Majesty’s sugar colonies in*
 ‘ *America, from the said colonies directly to foreign*
 ‘ *parts, in ships built in Great Britain, and navi-*
 ‘ *gated according to law.* As our sugar trade had,
 ‘ for some time, been in a declining condition,
 ‘ this act was as much wanted, as it gave univer-
 ‘ sal satisfaction when passed, except to those
 ‘ whose private interest led them to be against it;
 ‘ and yet, if our political physicians had been at-
 ‘ tending, ’tis probable, they would have opposed
 ‘ the bill; for they generally oppose every reme-
 ‘ dy that is prescribed by those who must be sup-
 ‘ posed to be our best physicians, because they
 ‘ have the best opportunity of knowing the state
 ‘ and circumstances of the nation. The *Act for*
 ‘ *the more effectual preventing of excessive and de-*
 ‘ *ceitful gaming,* was likewise passed during the
 ‘ secession, and is a law that must be agreeable to
 ‘ every one who has a due regard to the morals
 ‘ or happiness of the people; yet, if this bill
 ‘ had been at any other time proposed, it would,
 ‘ perhaps, have been violently opposed; for, in
 ‘ this case, as in every other of the like nature,
 ‘ it would have been said, that every new penal
 ‘ law was an addition to the power of the crown,
 ‘ already too extensive; which, in my opinion,
 ‘ is the same as if a physician should object to a
 ‘ prescription, because of its being proper for
 ‘ giving strength to his patient.

‘ For this reason, Sir, if the fly servant-maid
 ‘ were, upon this occasion, ask’d such another
 ‘ question, I’m afraid, she would answer, In a
 ‘ very bad way, Sir, for his physicians are, most
 ‘ of them, returned. But to be serious, Sir, I
 ‘ am

‘ am of opinion, that no gentleman ought to ab-
‘ sent himself from the service of his country in
‘ this house, when he can, without any great in-
‘ convenience, attend ; and therefore, I shall be
‘ against the motion, because our rejecting it will,
‘ I think, be a sort of tacit reprimand, with re-
‘ gard to those that, without any good reason,
‘ withdrew from their duty, last session of Par-
‘ liament.’

The last that spoke in this debate was the Lord Gage, the purport of whose speech was thus :

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, An honourable gentleman that spoke Lord Gage's
speech.
‘ some time ago against the motion, allowed, I
‘ think, that the secession, as he was pleased to
‘ term it, was the remote, though not the imme-
‘ diate cause of that alteration which soon after
‘ happened in our measures. Sir, if it was any
‘ cause, whether remote or immediate, it has
‘ done signal service, and has given great satisfac-
‘ tion to the nation. But the secession could add
‘ nothing to the obstinacy of the court of *Spain* ;
‘ because that court was before, as obstinate as it
‘ was possible for them to be. They never had
‘ any inclination, at least not for these twenty
‘ years, to do us justice. By the convention,
‘ they neither did us, nor promised us any justice :
‘ They would not so much as promise, not to do
‘ us any more injustice ; for, upon the face of
‘ the convention it appears, that they would not
‘ so much as promise to abstain from interrupting
‘ our navigation, and seizing our ships in the
‘ *American* seas. It is evident, that of late years,
‘ they never had an inclination to have any thing
‘ to do with us, unless it was to plunder our
‘ merchants, and amuse our ministers with fruit-
‘ less negotiations ; and a new foundation for al-
‘ lowing

‘ lowing ourselves to be treated in this manner,
‘ was all our ministers got by that famous con-
‘ vention. This, I am convinced, would have
‘ been the consequence, if it had not been for the
‘ secession. Our ministers would, upon the foun-
‘ dation of that convention, have gone on to
‘ treat and negotiate with *Spain*, perhaps for
‘ twenty years more, and the *Spanish Guarda*
‘ *Costa’s* would, in the mean time, have gone on
‘ in plundering our merchants and interrupting
‘ our trade. But such a number of members
‘ withdrawing, upon that convention’s being ap-
‘ proved of, convinced our ministers, that the
‘ nation would no longer endure to be treated by
‘ the court of *Spain* in such a treacherous and ig-
‘ nominiuous manner. Our ministers from thence
‘ saw, that they must begin to fight, either with
‘ *Spain*, or with their own countrymen; and
‘ they wisely chose the former, as being the safest
‘ for themselves, as well as the most honourable.

‘ This, Sir, I am convinced, the whole nation
‘ is convinced, was the real cause of that altera-
‘ tion in our measures, which happened soon after
‘ the secession; and therefore, however much it
‘ was condemned by those that remained within
‘ doors, it was condemned by no man without,
‘ unless he was such a one as was under a merce-
‘ nary dependence upon some of those that re-
‘ mained within. By none others, Sir, was it
‘ ever condemned; and as the gentlemen who
‘ withdrew upon that occasion, are no way ambi-
‘ tious of having their conduct approved of by
‘ such judges, I am sure no one of them has ever
‘ yet repented of what he did; so that if the ho-
‘ nourable gentleman that spoke last never for-
‘ gives but upon repentance, those gentlemen
‘ must all yet, and, I believe, for ever will, re-
‘ main under his wrath, but they are not, thank
‘ God! liable to his vengeance.

‘ The

‘ The only serious argument I have heard, Sir,
‘ against the motion is, lest it should interrupt or
‘ lessen that unanimity which now appears, in
‘ providing for every thing that may be necessary
‘ for a vigorous prosecution of the war, in which,
‘ I am fully satisfied, the honourable gentleman’s
‘ fears are altogether groundless. I dare answer
‘ for every one of those who retired from the
‘ house last session, and are now absent, that no
‘ one of them will oppose any measure necessary
‘ for prosecuting the war; and an honourable
‘ friend of his may, I believe, if he pleases, an-
‘ swer for most of the rest. I am persuaded, that
‘ no gentleman who is now in the house, or can
‘ hereafter be in it, will openly oppose providing
‘ for a vigorous prosecution of the war; and
‘ therefore I shall only wish, that it may be as vi-
‘ gorously prosecuted, as it will be unanimously
‘ provided for.

‘ In this session of Parliament, therefore, Sir,
‘ no gentleman could be under any real apprehen-
‘ sions of a contest about any thing relating to the
‘ war, though every member belonging to the
‘ house were now present, and continued so till
‘ the end of the session; but, as the whole nation
‘ will expect to hear some good accounts of the
‘ prosecution before next winter, I do not know
‘ but that we may then have some contests about
‘ the war, with regard to its prosecution; and
‘ therefore there may, perhaps, be some amongst
‘ us, who are far from wishing to see a full house,
‘ at any time, during next session. If there be
‘ any such amongst us, it is certainly their busi-
‘ ness to prevent the call of the house for this ses-
‘ sion, because it will be a precedent for doing the
‘ same in the next, and will be, in all future
‘ times, a convenient and agreeable precedent for
‘ those that are afraid of having an impartial par-
‘ liamentary inquiry into their conduct. But, for

‘ this very reason, Sir, I must be of opinion,
‘ that no gentleman who is unfeignedly for a vi-
‘ gorous prosecution of the war, or the preserva-
‘ tion of our constitution, can, when he seriously
‘ considers the consequences, be for making such
‘ a dangerous precedent.

‘ Thus, I hope, Sir, I have fully answered the
‘ only serious argument I have heard made use
‘ of, against my worthy friend’s motion. As
‘ for all the other arguments made use of upon
‘ the same side of the question, they were rather
‘ pieces of wit, than pieces of reason; and, as
‘ most of them were pointed at the gentlemen
‘ who, last session, withdrew from the house,
‘ they have nothing to do with any thing that
‘ can be proposed in this. But, I must observe,
‘ that every one of them either missed of its aim,
‘ or was very improperly applied. If the King
‘ of *Spain* resigned his crown with a real view of
‘ serving his country, he was in the right: If he
‘ resumed it again with the same view, he was in
‘ the right, and his subjects were in the right to
‘ receive him: And as for the disturbances he has
‘ since occasioned, I believe, most of them were
‘ originally owing to our misconduct; therefore,
‘ I am surprized to hear of them from that side
‘ of the house. If those who compose the ma-
‘ jority of this house, have a mind to prevent
‘ gentlemen ever having a view of serving their
‘ country, by leaving their seats, the best way is,
‘ never to pursue such measures as are disagreeable
‘ to a great majority of the nation; and while
‘ they take care to avoid such measures, they
‘ need fear no disturbances that any gentleman
‘ can occasion, either by leaving or resuming his
‘ seat in this house.

‘ As for the piece of *French* wit made use of
‘ by the honourable gentleman that spoke last,
‘ and applied by way of answer to the observation
‘ made

‘ made by the honourable gentleman that spoke
‘ before him, surely, Sir, every one must see that
‘ it was misapplied. If the observation is to be
‘ applied to the members of this house, for the
‘ gentleman that made it, did not, I think, make
‘ any application, we must all look upon ourselves
‘ as political physicians; and, indeed, we are so:
‘ We are properly the state physicians of our
‘ country, because we are to inquire into its
‘ grievances or distempers, and apply the proper
‘ remedies. Therefore, if that observation is to
‘ be applied to us, we must suppose that some of
‘ us are willing to attend, if we can but get a fee,
‘ even though we know we can be of no service
‘ to our country, and that others are unwilling to
‘ attend, except when they think they can be of
‘ real service to their country. I wish, Sir, the
‘ application had not been made, for whatever
‘ we may think within doors, those without will
‘ judge who are over-greedy of fees, and who
‘ are not. But, I must observe, that this piece
‘ of *French* wit proceeded from the contempt the
‘ *French* physicians had then brought themselves
‘ into, by their ignorance, and by their shewing
‘ a greater concern for their fees, than for the
‘ health or recovery of the patient. They were,
‘ at that time, become a proverb among the vul-
‘ gar, and a subject of ridicule in every part of
‘ that kingdom, except in their own assemblies;
‘ and, if we should, by our ignorance, bring our
‘ country into misfortunes, or begin to shew a
‘ greater concern for pensions and places than for
‘ the welfare of our country, we shall bring our-
‘ selves into the same contempt: We shall be-
‘ come a scoff among the vulgar, and a subject of
‘ ridicule in every part of this kingdom, except
‘ in our own assemblies. If this should ever
‘ come to be the case, this *French* piece of wit
‘ may then be properly applied, but not to those

‘ members that retire from such a contemptible
 ‘ assembly. It will be applied to the breaking up
 ‘ and meeting of Parliament: When our session is
 ‘ at an end, it will be said, The kingdom is in a
 ‘ fair way of doing well, for its physicians have
 ‘ taken their leave; and when we meet again, it
 ‘ will be said, The kingdom is in a dangerous
 ‘ state, for its physicians are, most of them, re-
 ‘ turned. I hope every gentleman that has a re-
 ‘ gard for the honour and dignity of Parliament,
 ‘ will endeavour to prevent this misfortune; and
 ‘ as, I think, nothing can contribute more towards
 ‘ our falling into a general contempt, than our
 ‘ putting a negative upon this motion, therefore,
 ‘ I shall most heartily give it my affirmative.’

This motion was at last agreed to without a di-
 vision.

Bill brought
 in for regis-
 tering sea-
 men.

The house of Commons having on *Monday* the
 26th of *November*, given leave to bring in a bill
 for registering all seamen, watermen, fishermen,
 lightermen, keelmen, bargemen, and seafaring men
 capable of service at sea, throughout his Majesty’s
 dominions; and the same being accordingly pre-
 pared, Sir *Charles Wager* presented it to the house,
 on *Tuesday* the 5th of *February*, when it was read
 a first time; and as soon as it was read over, Sir
John Barnard stood up, and spoke to the follow-
 ing purpose:

Sir *John*
Barnard’s
 speech a-
 gainst it.

‘ Mr. Speaker,
 ‘ I must own, Sir, that the want of sailors is
 ‘ very great, the present emergency very pressing,
 ‘ and the success of the war much hazarded by
 ‘ the difficulty of manning our ships: But the ad-
 ‘ ministration appears to me neither to act prudent-
 ‘ ly in discovering so publickly the embarrassments
 ‘ with which nothing but their misconduct has
 ‘ perplexed them, nor justly in demanding that
 ‘ their

‘ their mistakes should be repaired at the expence
‘ of those who deserve better from their country.

‘ The aversion, Sir, with which the sailors avoid
‘ the service of the crown, is not, I fear, without
‘ just reasons; but though the gentlemen in the
‘ administration have been long sensible of it, yet
‘ instead of removing that aversion by encourage-
‘ ment or rewards, they seem to regard it as an
‘ obstinacy that must be compelled to submission,
‘ by laws, restraints, registers and penalties. Be-
‘ cause the sailors claim the common privileges of
‘ *Englishmen*, their governors think it necessary to
‘ punish them for asserting their birthright, by
‘ depriving them of the appearance of freedom;
‘ for after such a register as is proposed, a sailor
‘ and a slave will be terms of the same significa-
‘ tion.

‘ Nor was it only in the power of the govern-
‘ ment to have endeavoured the reconciliation of
‘ the sailors; they might have used more expedi-
‘ tious methods for manning the fleet. The ma-
‘ rines that have been raised, too lately to be of
‘ any service, might with the same ease have been
‘ levied sooner; they might then have been dis-
‘ persed in proper proportions among the crews of
‘ our men of war, where, by instruction and ex-
‘ ample, the business of a common sailor might
‘ have been quickly learned, and our merchants
‘ might still have had a sufficient number of sailors
‘ to enable them to carry on their business.

‘ Thus far it is evident, that this bill is not ne-
‘ cessary, or is become necessary only by the fault
‘ of those that propose it. But since past errors
‘ cannot be recalled, it may be proper to consider
‘ the bill as it now lies before us, and examine
‘ how far the regulations intended by it are adapt-
‘ ed to the ends for which it is drawn up, by what
‘ arguments it is supported, and to what objections
‘ it seems to be exposed.

‘ It is impossible to hear the bill read without
 ‘ being immediately alarmed at an open attack
 ‘ upon the liberty of many thousands, who have
 ‘ doubtless the same claim of independency with
 ‘ other *Englishmen*, a claim which they have not
 ‘ forfeited by any crimes, and which I believe
 ‘ they value too highly to give up for any advan-
 ‘ tage that can be offered them in recompence.
 ‘ What reason can be assigned for placing these
 ‘ men in a state which every other subject would
 ‘ disdain? If the design be to propagate slavery,
 ‘ and to register one class of men after another,
 ‘ let the sailors, at least, be the last that shall lose
 ‘ their freedom. Let the first register be filled with
 ‘ the despicable names of pensioners, placemen,
 ‘ sycophants, and dependants; but let the brave,
 ‘ the hardy, the honest seaman retain his liberty,
 ‘ till luxury and corruption, with which the ex-
 ‘ ample of those, whom the world calls his supe-
 ‘ riors, may in time infect him, shall prepare him
 ‘ for slavery.

‘ Let us dwell, Sir, a short time upon the state
 ‘ of a seaman, registered as it is intended by this
 ‘ bill. He must appear whenever he is summoned,
 ‘ at all hazards, whatever be the circumstances of
 ‘ his family, or the state of his private affairs, he
 ‘ must in many cases expose himself to the penal-
 ‘ ties of the act, or leave his family at a time when
 ‘ his assistance and direction are absolutely necessa-
 ‘ ry. He must, if he should by any misfortune
 ‘ or negligence, be encumber’d with debt, either
 ‘ fall under the distresses which the breach of this
 ‘ law will bring upon him, or lie at the mercy of
 ‘ his creditors, perhaps exasperated by long disap-
 ‘ pointments, or by long practice of severity hard-
 ‘ ened in oppression. Nor, if he should either by
 ‘ industry acquire, or receive by inheritance an
 ‘ ample fortune, is he in less danger from the bill
 ‘ before us; he may be torn from his possessions,
 ‘ and

‘ and forced into hardships which no man now
‘ undergoes but from the sense of fear or want;
‘ so that this bill equally disables a sailor from a-
‘ voiding distress, or enjoying prosperity.

‘ Such, Sir, give me leave to repeat it, will be
‘ the immediate consequences with regard to our
‘ sailors, but the effects of this bill will reach
‘ much farther. That every discouragement of
‘ our seamen is an injury to our merchants, is too
‘ plain to require proof; and indeed what regard
‘ has been paid to our traders, is apparent from
‘ that clause of the bill that allows sailors to be
‘ taken from our trading vessels in *America*. If
‘ the unhappy merchants engaged in that branch
‘ of our commerce, a commerce far more beneficial
‘ than all others to the *British* nation, if these
‘ men, from whose labours we derive all our
‘ wealth, and that power which is the consequence
‘ of wealth, have been so unfortunate as to offend
‘ their ministerial superiors, let them be punished
‘ with all the severity due to so enormous an of-
‘ fence; let their trade be prohibited, and their
‘ ships confined at home by a perpetual embargo;
‘ but let us not be so cruel as to suffer them to
‘ send their ships to *America*, and then debar them
‘ from the possibility of returning.

‘ More needs not, in my opinion, be said to
‘ shew how little this bill deserves our approba-
‘ tion; if it should become a law, nothing can be
‘ expected, but that all who are now engaged in
‘ the business of navigation, will leave their em-
‘ ployments rather than their liberty. At least,
‘ Sir, those youths whose years allow them the
‘ choice of their profession, will never doom them-
‘ selves to slavery; so that by manning our navy
‘ in this manner, we shall put an end to our power
‘ and our commerce.’

William Pulteney, Esq; spoke next as follows.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Pulteney's speech.

‘ Sir, The disadvantages arising to the nation
‘ by our inability to equip our fleets with that ex-
‘ pedition that war often requires, are, I find, al-
‘ lowed on both sides to be very great. I am suf-
‘ ficiently convinced of them, and by consequence
‘ am of opinion, that we cannot do a greater ser-
‘ vice to our country, than by finding out some
‘ expedient by which the naval power of *England*
‘ may be exerted, with no greater delays than at-
‘ tend the military preparations of *France* or *Spain*.
‘ How far the present difficulties may be ascribed
‘ to the conduct of the ministry, or whether they
‘ might have been prevented by a more early levy
‘ of marines, I am not able to determine. But
‘ whatever be the cause, the effect may be ex-
‘ tremely injurious to our trade and our honour;
‘ and therefore, Sir, it may not be improper to
‘ make use of some extraordinary means to supply
‘ the present exigence.

‘ Nothing could be more for the honour or ad-
‘ vantage of this nation, than some law which
‘ might secure a sufficient number of sailors for
‘ the service of the fleet, without any infraction of
‘ their liberty, or violation of their civil rights.
‘ But no man can defend such a scheme, as tends
‘ to deprive any class of our fellow-subjects of the
‘ common privileges of their country. Liberty
‘ is never to be injured, whatever is suffered or
‘ whatever endangered.

‘ But surely the evil is not so inveterate as to
‘ require such severe methods of cure, surely re-
‘ wards may have equal force to allure, as pu-
‘ nishments to affright our sailors into the ser-
‘ vice of the crown. Let us rather have recourse
‘ to any other expedient than violence and com-
‘ pulsion,

‘pulsion, which can only remove our difficulties
 ‘for the present, but must in reality heighten
 ‘the dreadful apprehensions which our seamen
 ‘already entertain, and drive them into the ser-
 ‘vice of other nations.

‘The present bill I can neither intirely ap-
 ‘prove, nor reject. The questions which arise
 ‘from a cursory consideration of it, are of too
 ‘much importance to be negligently determined,
 ‘and involve too many consequences to be soon
 ‘examined in their full extent. I am convin-
 ‘ced, that our naval establishment is yet very
 ‘imperfect, and that some speedy regulation is
 ‘required: But whether the scheme now propo-
 ‘sed deserves the sanction of Parliament, a more
 ‘attentive and deliberate survey must deter-
 ‘mine.

‘I therefore take the liberty to propose, That
 ‘the second reading of this bill may be deferred
 ‘for a few days, and that in the mean time it
 ‘may be printed, that every member may have
 ‘leisure and opportunity to bestow that conside-
 ‘ration upon it, which it requires and deserves.’

Admiral *Norris* spoke to the following effect.

‘Sir, The design of the bill now proposed,
 ‘it is by no means necessary to explain, nor can
 ‘any better proof than our own experience be
 ‘demanded, how much the present circumstan-
 ‘ces of the nation require this or some other
 ‘bill, by which that design may be promoted.
 ‘The importance of the present war cannot be
 ‘denied. We have often been told, that our
 ‘trade and navigation are at hazard, that we are
 ‘asserting the common rights of nature, that
 ‘we must now conquer or be undone, and that
 ‘the contest is not for honour, but for life. Yet
 ‘we suffer our ardour to languish, and our me-
 ‘naces

Admiral
Norris's
 speech.

‘ naces to be lost in the air without execution.
 ‘ We have indeed put our fleets into commission,
 ‘ nominated commanders, and collected naval
 ‘ and military stores; but these fleets are yet in
 ‘ the harbours, and these stores decaying without
 ‘ use. For with whatever importunity the na-
 ‘ tion might call out for war, whatever venge-
 ‘ ance they might threaten, and however they
 ‘ might detest or despise the *Spaniards*, there
 ‘ was, perhaps, never such an apparent and ge-
 ‘ neral dislike to the sea-service discovered be-
 ‘ fore. Every hardship, every difficulty is pre-
 ‘ ferred before it, and every expedient practised
 ‘ to avoid it. Violence and kindness are equally
 ‘ ineffectual; nor impresses can force, nor re-
 ‘ wards allure them to the fleet.

‘ What is the cause of this prejudice, and the
 ‘ evils produced by it, perhaps it is now too late
 ‘ to inquire. The present exigence, Sir, demands
 ‘ not long retrospective disquisitions, but speedy
 ‘ determinations, and an immediate remedy;
 ‘ which, whether we can expect from the bill
 ‘ proposed, must be considered by the house.
 ‘ One objection that will be made to it, an ob-
 ‘ jection very specious and popular, may be ea-
 ‘ sily foreseen, and, I think, removed with no
 ‘ less facility; we shall be told that it proposes
 ‘ the introduction of a *French* practice, a prac-
 ‘ tice unknown to the constitution of *England*,
 ‘ and that the measures of arbitrary govern-
 ‘ ments are not to be imitated here. Thus gen-
 ‘ tlemen may declaim when reason is against
 ‘ them, and oppose measures not for their conse-
 ‘ quences, but for their original. They may
 ‘ condemn a scheme because it comes from
 ‘ *France*, and may, perhaps, be applauded for
 ‘ their zeal, by noisy faction, or unthinking ho-
 ‘ nesty; but the cool, the prudent, and the loy-
 ‘ al, will easily discern that something more is
 ‘ necessary

‘ necessary for the support of opposition and the
‘ confutation of argument. By the prosperity
‘ of the *French* (that prosperity with which the
‘ present administration has been so often re-
‘ proached) it is evident, that many of their
‘ measures deserve our imitation, and, if our
‘ constitution be defective, is it not one of the
‘ great ends of this assembly to improve it? By
‘ whom was it advanced from its original imper-
‘ fection to its present degree of excellence, but
‘ by the same powers which are now called upon
‘ to add one barrier more to its security?

‘ I own, Sir, that to the method proposed
‘ many difficulties may be objected; the elo-
‘ quence of gentlemen may be displayed, and
‘ their sagacity exerted in tracing all its conse-
‘ quences, and exposing its imagined tendency.
‘ But is any consequence to be apprehended from
‘ it equally dangerous with the want of seamen
‘ in time of war? Can we suffer by the execu-
‘ tion of this scheme in any degree proportionate
‘ to the disappointment of our expeditions, and
‘ loss of every opportunity which the weakness
‘ or negligence of our enemies may afford us?

‘ As every form of government, so every me-
‘ thod of administration has its inconvenience,
‘ which will always be to those, who did not
‘ propose it, or who proposed any other, the
‘ subject of censure.

‘ To try many expedients upon emergencies
‘ like this, is not practicable; it seems, there-
‘ fore, prudent, Sir, to put that method in prac-
‘ tice which the experience of our neighbours
‘ proves to have been successful. That it has
‘ been of great use to their government, is ap-
‘ parent from the expedition with which their
‘ fleets are fitted out, and that individuals have
‘ not suffered by it may be presumed from the
‘ increase of the numbers of their sailors, since
‘ that

‘ that establishment. Let us not therefore reject
 ‘ any measures, because our enemies have practi-
 ‘ sed them, but let us rather employ their own
 ‘ policies against them, and subdue them by the
 ‘ means that have enabled them to resist us.’

He was answered by Sir *William Wyndham*, to the following purport.

Sir *William*
Wyndham's
 speech.

‘ Sir, The weakness of condemning measures
 ‘ because they are practised by our neighbours,
 ‘ or our enemies, has by the honourable gentle-
 ‘ man been sufficiently exposed; but he either
 ‘ negligently or willingly forgets, that to recom-
 ‘ mend them from their example only is equally
 ‘ trifling. That a scheme is a *French* scheme,
 ‘ can certainly be no sufficient reason for treating
 ‘ it with contempt or detestation; but that it
 ‘ has been executed with success in *France*, cannot
 ‘ of itself prove, that it will be of equal advan-
 ‘ tage to this nation. To receive an alarm at
 ‘ the proposal of establishing any part of the
 ‘ policy of absolute governments among us, is
 ‘ not the discontent of faction, but the caution
 ‘ of experience; not the rage of opposition, but
 ‘ the zeal of integrity. For my part, Sir, if I
 ‘ know that any practice is countenanced in
 ‘ *France*, it will seem at least to prove, that it
 ‘ has no tendency to the advancement of liberty,
 ‘ and liberty has in all uncorrupt Parliaments
 ‘ been their first and greatest care.

‘ On this occasion, Sir, I beg leave to ob-
 ‘ serve, that the prosperity of freemen and of
 ‘ slaves is very different, and therefore is to be
 ‘ promoted by different means. The wretches
 ‘ that are doom'd to live under the yoke of an
 ‘ arbitrary government, whose properties, whose
 ‘ quiet, and whose lives depend upon the caprice
 ‘ of a despotick lord, have but one kind of hap-
 ‘ piness

‘ piness to hope for, the happiness of seeing
‘ themselves more rich, powerful, and formida-
‘ ble than the slaves of another Monarch, the
‘ happiness of seeing their Prince courted by his
‘ neighbours, and themselves honoured in fo-
‘ reign countries, by those who feel the same
‘ miseries without the same alleviations. This
‘ happiness, Sir, poor and chimerical as it is,
‘ we know to be all that the greatest part of
‘ mankind appears to enjoy; and this happiness
‘ may be promoted by measures like this now
‘ proposed to our imitation. An universal re-
‘ gister of sailors may enable a Monarch to man
‘ his fleets with expedition, expedition may pro-
‘ cure success, and success advance the power of
‘ his people, and by advancing their power, in-
‘ crease the only happiness which they dare to
‘ hope for. The administration in those coun-
‘ tries, lies under no temptation to make any
‘ other use of power than to aggrandize their
‘ Prince, and protect the people from foreign
‘ enemies. They have no elections to influence,
‘ nor any opposition to contend with; they have
‘ no new demands of authority to make, nor
‘ any danger to fear from an oppressed nation.

‘ But the greatness of *Englishmen*, the true
‘ greatness of rational beings, consists not in ex-
‘ tent of dominion, not in the empty sounds of
‘ victory and triumph, not in precarious wealth,
‘ nor in the power of oppressing others. It con-
‘ sists in freedom and independence, in privileges
‘ not to be forfeited but by their own consent.
‘ Commerce, wealth and power, are secondary
‘ means of happiness, which would, if liberty be
‘ lost, be of no value. Liberty is therefore to be
‘ first secured, nor any other advantages to be
‘ pursued but by methods consistent with the
‘ rights of a free nation.

‘ All

‘ All happiness, Sir, is attended with some inconvenience; and liberty is not to be preserved without caution, anxiety, and attention. The complicated interests of this nation, makes their counsels more perplexed and the administration of their government more difficult. When the *French* are engaged in a war with *England*, they have no enemies but the *English* to contend with; all measures, that can contribute to success, are salutary and expedient, because they promote the only happiness which that form of government admits of. But the *English* have many dangers to obviate, and many enemies to engage, they may by trusting their governours with unlimited authority perhaps become more successful in war, but what would the success avail them, if that authority be made use of to enslave them?

‘ The scheme recommended with so much warmth, I grant, Sir, is beneficial to *France*, because it promotes the power of the government, and by consequence the happiness of that servile nation, which is happy as the government is powerful. The scheme is of use in *France*, because the government and the people have in reality different interests; but it would be destructive here, because our people and our government ought to have the same interest, or if they are ever divided in their views, the interest of the people ought to prevail.

‘ Having thus shewn, how little the example of *France* ought to be regarded; how little the measures of a government absolute and unaccountable deserve the imitation of a people, who boast of being subject to laws made by themselves; I shall not engage in so superfluous a task as that of shewing how much the regulation proposed in this bill, is inconsistent with our constitution. Surely nothing is more incompatible with
freedom

‘ freedom and independence than restraint and
‘ compulsion.

‘ As to the present situation of our sailors, it is
‘ sufficiently deplorable. That honest, laborious
‘ and brave class of men, to which we owe all our
‘ power, our riches and reputation, are already ex-
‘ posed to hardships from which every other sub-
‘ ject of *Great Britain* is exempt. These hard-
‘ ships, Sir, the daily outrages of an impress make
‘ sufficiently apparent. Outrages in themselves
‘ hateful, and in their consequence destructive.
‘ outrages, by which multitudes of the bravest
‘ subjects in this nation have been driven to seek
‘ for a kinder treatment from absolute Princes.
‘ Nor is it to be wondered at, that they have ra-
‘ ther chosen to live where they are only slaves in
‘ common with the rest of the people, than where
‘ they have the mortification of seeing that free-
‘ dom which they, and they only are not suffered
‘ to enjoy.

‘ It is not without the warmest indignation that
‘ an honest mind can conceive a brave, an industri-
‘ ous, a freeborn *Englishman*, torn from his em-
‘ ployment, deprived of his bread, and condemn’d
‘ without a crime to serve under masters whose
‘ tyranny he abhors, or perhaps those whose
‘ ignorance he despises. It is surely not without
‘ compassion, that any man can see him at his re-
‘ turn from a long and hazardous voyage, forced
‘ into new labours without the intermission of a
‘ single day, and without the sight of his family,
‘ for whom he had been labouring. Yet such is
‘ frequently the fate of our sailors, and even this
‘ might be, perhaps, forgiven by themselves, if it
‘ was the last resource of a distressed people, the
‘ effect of inevitable and invincible necessity. But
‘ when it is added to the account of these hard-
‘ ships, that they are often the amusements of
‘ power and arts of an administration to delude
‘ their

‘ their country, surely nothing can be more justly
‘ hateful and execrable.

‘ What is intended by the bill now proposed,
‘ but to inflict those hardships by law which are
‘ practised, at least, under the pretence of extraor-
‘ dinary emergencies? What can be the immediate
‘ consequence of it, but the slavery of those who
‘ most contribute to freedom? And what can we
‘ expect farther from it, but that one encroachment
‘ on liberty, will make way for another?

‘ That our fleets are useless without men, and
‘ that from our fleets only we can expect success in
‘ the present war, does not require to be proved;
‘ nor will it be deny’d that the present war is of
‘ high importance. But success against the most
‘ formidable enemy, may be purchased too dear.
‘ There are, whatever may be the honourable gen-
‘ tleman’s opinion, many evils which victory itself
‘ cannot countervail. The loss of fleets, of armies,
‘ of dominions, are less dreadful, than the loss of
‘ liberty.

‘ But that this war may be successfully prose-
‘ cuted, that the nation may not suffer by unsuc-
‘ cessful hostilities after a shameful peace, that the
‘ *British* flag may recover its honour, and her arms
‘ be more successful than her politicks, it seems
‘ necessary to form some scheme for reconciling
‘ our seamen to the publick service; but surely
‘ they deserve so much regard from us, that all
‘ gentle methods should be tried, with which I for
‘ my part shall readily concur; but I shall oppose
‘ every thing, as a member of this house, to which
‘ I should not agree, if I were myself a sailor.’

Sir Robert Walpole then spoke in substance as follows.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, It always portends well to the success of
‘ a deliberation, when the contending parties agree
‘ upon

‘ upon the reality of the grievance, and the ne-
‘ cessity of redressing it ; because both parties, if
‘ they be sincere, must in consequence of their
‘ principles endeavour to find out some means of
‘ supplying the defects which they acknowledge.
‘ The difficulty of manning our ships of war,
‘ the delays which that difficulty produces, and
‘ the disappointments that are the consequences of
‘ those delays, are neither denied nor extenuated.
‘ The necessity therefore of consulting about the
‘ proper means of raising seamen with more expe-
‘ dition, is already admitted.

‘ The hardships of an impress have been long
‘ dwelt upon, and display’d with all the power of
‘ eloquence. Nor can it be affirmed that this me-
‘ thod of raising seamen is either eligible or legal.
‘ I am not about to answer the objections against
‘ it, but I shall strengthen them by one more
‘ forcible, in my opinion, than all the rest : This
‘ method has been found ineffectual and insuffi-
‘ cient for the attainment of its end.

‘ With the experience of former reigns, or
‘ wars remembered only in books, I shall not
‘ weary your attention ; it is too apparent, from
‘ our own observation, that the most diligent im-
‘ press may be eluded, and our ships of war lie
‘ inactive in port, for want of men, while multi-
‘ tudes well acquainted with the service of the sea,
‘ lie dispersed all over the country, ready to ap-
‘ pear and resume their occupation as soon as the
‘ impress is intermitted, and the demands of the
‘ government supplied.

‘ Not many months ago, the common me-
‘ thods had been used, till not another sailor was
‘ to be found ; their known places of refuge were
‘ all searched, the river was clear’d, and no stra-
‘ tagem left unpractised, by which there was the
‘ least hope of gaining a single man. Then the
‘ impress was suspended, and protections were

‘ granted. This alteration of measures soon made
‘ it apparent, that there was no want of sailors in
‘ the nation. They burst out by thousands from
‘ their retreats, and entered into the service of
‘ the traders with more than usual eagerness. No
‘ less than sixteen thousand received protections
‘ from the admiralty, for the service of colliers
‘ and coasters only. Such is their obstinacy to
‘ decline the publick service, and so much are
‘ the people generally prejudiced in their favour,
‘ that they will always abscond and will always
‘ be conceal’d.

‘ But that this practice is to the last degree
‘ dangerous to the community, must be universally
‘ confessed, and that the naval armaments of *Eng-*
‘ *land* become far less useful to herself and less
‘ formidable to her enemies, by the delays with
‘ which they are always obstructed, delays, which
‘ the enemy who has no such difficulty to en-
‘ counter, can always improve to his advantage,
‘ and which give a superiority to those powers,
‘ which must otherwise become an easy conquest.
‘ While we are publishing proclamations, issuing
‘ warrants for impresses, and gleaning up our sailors
‘ by single men, our secrets are betray’d, our de-
‘ signs and our enterprizes defeated.

‘ To what is it to be attributed, that the naval
‘ power of *France* has been so suddenly encrea-
‘ sed? We have more ships of war, more officers
‘ of experience, and a far greater extent of com-
‘ merce. What then can make them formidable
‘ at sea, but the facility with which they can
‘ equip their fleets? It is to small purpose to build
‘ new vessels, to cast new guns, and endeavour
‘ to astonish *Europe* with an enumeration of our
‘ fleets. Such boasts will in a short time lose their
‘ effect, and be discovered to be nothing more
‘ than empty sounds, the farce of war, and the
‘ menaces of impotence. To assert the empire
‘ of

‘ of the sea, a part of our dominions of the great-
‘ est value, we must not only have ships but
‘ sailors, sailors ready to obey our call, and rush
‘ out on sudden expeditions.

‘ How much such a regulation would add to
‘ the natural advantages of our situation and our
‘ coasts, how much our influence would be en-
‘ creased, and our power extended by it, no gen-
‘ tleman in this house can be ignorant; nor, in-
‘ deed, have any of the opponents of this bill
‘ denied the importance of the end proposed by
‘ it. Those that have argued against it with the
‘ greatest warmth, have considered it as an inva-
‘ sion of liberty, an attempt to subject the sailors
‘ to restraints and penalties, to which all other
‘ subjects are strangers, a consideration that has
‘ produced many pathetic exclamations, and af-
‘ fecting descriptions, many severe insinuations,
‘ and zealous outcries, which may, perhaps, have
‘ some immediate effect upon the hearer, but
‘ soon evaporate and give way to reason and to
‘ justice; and, I think, it has not yet appeared
‘ that reason or justice are against the bill.

‘ The melancholy representation that has been
‘ made of the unhappy state of a registered sea-
‘ man, owes every circumstance of terror to the
‘ supposition that the powers proposed by this
‘ bill to be granted to the admiralty, will be ill-
‘ employ’d; a supposition, which the conduct of
‘ the gentlemen entrusted with that part of the
‘ administration, has made, if not wholly impro-
‘ bable, at least unnecessary; nor has it been pro-
‘ ved that this new authority is such as would
‘ bring with it any temptation to abuse it.

‘ Why any man should be exempt from obli-
‘ gations to serve his country, it will not be easy
‘ to shew; and what else is required of sailors by
‘ this bill, than that they be ready to serve their
‘ country when lawfully required? If they are

‘ laid under any particular penalties upon refusal,
‘ it is only because their service is more frequently
‘ necessary, and upon more important occasions;
‘ and their hardships, if the restraints proposed
‘ in this bill deserve that name, is a tacit acknow-
‘ ledgment of their usefulness, and an honorary
‘ distinction of those men who contribute most to
‘ the safety and prosperity of this nation.

‘ There is no calumny that I less deserve, and
‘ very few that I would more carefully avoid, or
‘ more zealously confute, than of being an ene-
‘ my to the sailors, that brave class of men to
‘ whom we are indebted for the honours of war
‘ and the ornaments of peace, who equally enrich
‘ and defend their country, and merit equally our
‘ regard, as soldiers, and as traders. Far, there-
‘ fore, is it from my inclination to expose them to
‘ any other difficulties than those that naturally
‘ arise from their adventurous profession; far be
‘ it from me to brand those men with marks of
‘ infamy, whose industry procures us most of the
‘ pleasures of life, and whose valour secures the
‘ enjoyment of them, from being imbittered with
‘ apprehensions of foreign power.

‘ The inconveniencies that may ensue from this
‘ act, will be balanced by some advantages: The
‘ powers now proposed, may be exercised in such
‘ a manner, as, to make the yoke so much dread-
‘ ed, hardly felt; when the regulations are once
‘ established, and the prejudices of novelty are
‘ worn away, the sailors will find the alteration of
‘ their condition scarcely perceptible, except on
‘ particular occasions, such occasions as are, even
‘ in their present state, already supplied by extra-
‘ ordinary and violent methods.

‘ Let it be however admitted, that after this
‘ bill shall be passed, the condition of a seaman
‘ will be somewhat less eligible than at present,
‘ that he will be less master of his own actions,
‘ and

‘ and more subject to the powers of the govern-
‘ ment, than other *Englishmen* ; I do not, even
‘ upon this concession, discover either the injustice
‘ or unreasonableness of this bill ; I cannot think
‘ it unreasonable, that some measures should be
‘ taken for the security of the nation, for the ef-
‘ ficacy of our arms, and for the honour of the
‘ crown ; and I think the justice of that maxim,
‘ which declares the preservation of the publick
‘ to be the strongest law, has never been yet con-
‘ troverted.

‘ That some expedient of this kind is now ne-
‘ cessary for the benefit of the publick, and may
‘ soon become necessary for its preservation, is
‘ evident and uncontested, but from what cause
‘ this necessity arises, has been made a question ;
‘ it has been imputed by an honourable gentleman
‘ to the negligence of the administration, and the
‘ long delay of levying marines, which he ima-
‘ gined might have supplied the place of sailors.
‘ But he forgets that there is no efficacy in the
‘ name of marines, that qualifies men, raw and
‘ unexperienced, though raised under that denomi-
‘ nation, to act with readiness and dexterity in a
‘ sea engagement ; marines, unacquainted with
‘ the sea, will act but like mere landmen, and
‘ the nation that trusts her honour and security to
‘ such warriors, is exposed to hazards from which,
‘ I hope, this nation will always be secure. The
‘ marines, whatever period he may assign as the
‘ proper time for raising them, must have been
‘ yet strangers to more than half their discipline,
‘ however carefully instructed, or however distri-
‘ buted among abler seamen ; and their ignorance
‘ would have given our enemies a superiority,
‘ which their own bravery, however exalted by
‘ themselves, or their politicks, however magni-
‘ fied by some of our own countrymen, could
‘ never procure them.

‘ It seems more rational to allot the young and
‘ unskilful seamen to our trading vessels, which
‘ have fewer dangers to fear, and fewer enemies
‘ to contend with. A man who has practised the
‘ business of navigation but a short time, may
‘ manage the sails, and go before the wind, when
‘ he has nothing to perplex his thoughts and
‘ disturb his labour, or has nothing, however, to
‘ oppose, but the winds and the waves; but
‘ much greater address, much longer practice is
‘ required to govern a ship in a day of battle,
‘ where the stratagems of an enemy are to be de-
‘ feated, momentary dangers to be avoided, and
‘ sudden opportunities to be snatched, when the
‘ least negligence or omission cannot be repaired,
‘ and skill as well as courage must decide the
‘ day.

‘ If we suppose, in opposition to reason and
‘ experience, that the same ability is necessary in
‘ the service of the merchants, as in that of the
‘ crown; let it be considered, whether the nation
‘ will suffer more by the miscarriage of trading
‘ vessels, or of the royal fleet; whether it is not
‘ better that traffick should be for a time obstruct-
‘ ed, than that our fleets, by which that traf-
‘ fick is preserved, should be ruined or endan-
‘ gered?

‘ It is therefore evident that sailors, and none
‘ but sailors, are required to serve on board our
‘ ships of war; and to procure a certain, con-
‘ stant, and ready supply of sailors, is the sole
‘ intention of this bill; an intention of too much
‘ consequence to admit of being impeded by an
‘ ill-timed regard for the ease of particular per-
‘ sons, or a popular affectation of tenderness for
‘ liberty.

‘ If example were of any weight, I could urge
‘ the example of a nation jealous of liberty, and
‘ prudent in the transaction of affairs, a nation
‘ whose

‘ whose success is a sufficient justification of their
‘ maxims. The *Dutch*, when they are engaged
‘ in war, or upon occasion fit out a fleet, are al-
‘ ways careful that their ships of war are well
‘ provided with sailors, before their merchants
‘ are at liberty to admit any into their service.
‘ That the importance of trade is well understood
‘ by the *Dutch*, was never doubted; but it appears
‘ by this practice, that they hold it more advan-
‘ tageous to prosper in war than in commerce;
‘ their embargoes are therefore laid without re-
‘ laxation, and without distinction, nor is a single
‘ vessel dismissed from their harbours till their ar-
‘ mament is compleat.

‘ This appears to me a sufficient proof, that
‘ trade cannot suffer by a vigorous prosecution of
‘ war; at least, as it must suffer in proportion to
‘ the duration of the war, those methods by
‘ which victory and peace will most speedily be
‘ attained, will probably injure it least.

‘ But, if the example of our neighbours is not
‘ sufficient to influence our conduct, let us re-
‘ view the procedure of our countrymen, in a
‘ time which every *Englishman* is proud at the re-
‘ membrance of. In our late war with *France*,
‘ that war which an honourable gentleman propo-
‘ sed lately as the model of our present under-
‘ takings, among other expedients for promoting
‘ the success of the *British* arms, an act was passed
‘ relating to our sailors, by which, our trading
‘ vessels were allowed no more than one able sea-
‘ man and one boy to an hundred tons, besides
‘ the master, mate, and carpenter; nor did even
‘ this allowance, sparing as it may seem, extend
‘ to vessels of more than three hundred tons.

‘ Such are the reasons, such is the justice of
‘ this bill, and such is the conduct of our wisest
‘ neighbours, and such has been our own in our
‘ most happy times, when our policy and our

‘ arms were equally the terror of the world ;
 ‘ whether this example shall be now followed,
 ‘ must be left to the determination of the house ;
 ‘ only let me entreat those gentlemen, that shall
 ‘ declare their disapprobation of the bill now be-
 ‘ fore us, not to give way to foreign reflections,
 ‘ injurious insinuations, or undeterminate censures,
 ‘ and general exclamations ; the importance of
 ‘ the question demands a different behaviour. It
 ‘ is now inquir’d, whether our arms shall assert our
 ‘ claim to an open and uninterrupted navigation,
 ‘ whether our trade shall be protected, our flag
 ‘ honour’d, and our injuries redress’d, whether
 ‘ our menaces shall raise terror or contempt, and
 ‘ our declaration of war discover our power to
 ‘ *Europe* or our folly. It is now inquired, whe-
 ‘ ther our fleet shall assert the dominion of the
 ‘ sea, or remain in our ports for want of sailors.

‘ Surely, the most unprejudic’d and serious deli-
 ‘ beration is necessary on this occasion ; and, that
 ‘ every gentleman in this house may have an op-
 ‘ portunity of considering it at leisure with the at-
 ‘ tention which it must be confessed to deserve,
 ‘ and form such schemes as may secure the trade
 ‘ and honour of the nation, without any invasion
 ‘ of the liberty of particular persons ; I willingly
 ‘ add my voice to the honourable gentleman’s pro-
 ‘ posal, That the bill be printed, and the second
 ‘ reading delay’d to a proper time.’

Samuel Sandys, Esq; spoke to this effect.

‘ Mr. Speaker,
 ‘ Sir, All that can be urged in favour of such an
 ‘ establishment, as is proposed by this bill, has
 ‘ been produced by the right honourable gentle-
 ‘ man ; all the force of eloquence, and all the
 ‘ dexterity of argumentation have been employ’d
 ‘ on this occasion, and might perhaps have pro-
 ‘ duc’d

Mr. San-
 dy's speech.

‘ duc’d greater effects, had they not been deprav’d
‘ by some of the artifices of sophistry, and frauds
‘ of misrepresentation; for nothing is more certain
‘ than that the number of seamen to whom pro-
‘ tections are reported to have been granted, was
‘ magnified beyond the truth. Sixteen thousand
‘ protections might perhaps be granted, but not all
‘ of them to sailors; the arbitrary practices of the
‘ officers, entrusted with despotick authority by
‘ warrants of impress, have made it necessary for
‘ others to procure protections, for the security of
‘ what no man has a right of violating, their per-
‘ sons and their liberty: Not only our sailors have
‘ been dragg’d out of our trading vessels, but pas-
‘ sengers, strangers to the art of navigation, have
‘ been hurried away without any respect to their
‘ remonstrances however reasonable, or evidence
‘ however clear. Passengers, therefore, have
‘ thought protections necessary, and to passengers
‘ a third part of those protections were probably
‘ given. So that the most plausible part of the
‘ argument is much weaken’d, and indeed, the
‘ whole will soon fall before a strict examination.

‘ With regard to the sailors, it is only urged in
‘ the extenuation of the hardships imposed upon
‘ them, that the power of the admiralty may be
‘ exerted in such a manner as to be less grievous
‘ than is feared: But what makes the difference
‘ between a slave and a freeman, except that the
‘ happiness of one is in his own power, and that
‘ of the other in the hand of his master? I hope
‘ every *Englishman* will think himself miserable,
‘ whenever he may be made miserable at the
‘ choice of another.

‘ With regard to the necessities of the publick,
‘ if our affairs require that part of the people
‘ should be made slaves, I do not see how those
‘ that have been intrusted with the administration
‘ can be cleared from the charge of introducing
‘ slavery;

‘ slavery ; and if one class of men must be sacri-
 ‘ fic’d, every man will endeavour to exempt him-
 ‘ self and his posterity from that unhappy number.

‘ This bill will be particularly dreadful to those
 ‘ men that ply upon the inland rivers, men very
 ‘ useful to the community, and beneficial to trade,
 ‘ but who never saw the sea, and have the same
 ‘ apprehensions of it with other landmen; these
 ‘ will soon be driven from their calling by the
 ‘ dread of such coercive laws, and put an end to
 ‘ all the advantages which navigable waters pro-
 ‘ duce to the nation.’

The bill was accordingly ordered to be read a second time, and to be printed, which of course put off the second reading for some days; and the bill being accordingly printed and delivered to the members by the 12th, it was then ordered to be read a second time on that day sevensnight. Accordingly, on *Tuesday* the 19th, it was read a second time, when the Lord *Gage* spoke against its being committed, as follows, *viz.*

Lord Gage's
speech.

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, I have attended to the reading of this
 ‘ bill, and am confident, that did the gentlemen,
 ‘ who brought it in, see the consequences of it, in
 ‘ the same light as I do, and indeed almost every
 ‘ body, that ever I heard speak of it, they never
 ‘ would have done it.

‘ The bill is no more than almost an exact copy
 ‘ of the ordinances for the sea service, made use
 ‘ of in a neighbouring kingdom, without consider-
 ‘ ing the different effects of its operation, in a free
 ‘ country and an arbitrary one.

‘ I have often been in *France*; and by my ac-
 ‘ quaintance there, with those who are at the head
 ‘ of marine affairs, had opportunity of making
 ‘ myself thoroughly master of one of the finest re-
 ‘ gulated

‘gulated plans for an arbitrary country; which is,
‘their method of registering their seamen and
‘manning their fleets; and though no one man in
‘*France* is to register himself, as prescribed by this
‘bill, or is ever impress’d, yet, if at any time the
‘King of *France* gives his orders to have his fleet
‘mann’d, in six weeks time, with 20 or 30,000
‘seamen, ’tis performed to the very day: But this
‘proceeds from the good usage and encouragement
‘the sailors meet with there.

‘As to the bill before us, give me leave to say,
‘it is the most flagrant, bare-fac’d attempt upon
‘the liberties of his Majesty’s subjects, throughout
‘all his dominions, that ever was brought into
‘Parliament: But I shall speak of it, only as it
‘relates to *England*.

‘Where, in the first place, it is not only to en-
‘slave, for the best part of their lives, upwards
‘of one hundred and fifty thousand free-born sub-
‘jects, and to invest the crown with an absolute
‘power over them; but also, thereby, to give
‘the crown a farther power of influencing the
‘elections throughout *England*: Both which points,
‘beside the distressing of all trade, which must
‘ruin the nation, I shall endeavour to make out
‘from the bill.

‘To prove that the scope of this bill is to en-
‘slave such a number of his Majesty’s free-born
‘subjects, ’twill be sufficient to quote the very
‘words of it, which set forth, That all seamen,
‘fishermen, lightermen, bargemen, keelmen,
‘boatmen, trowmen, watermen, and all other his
‘Majesty’s subjects, within the kingdom of *Great*
‘*Britain*, &c. who get their livelihood by going
‘to sea, or by following any business upon the
‘water, being, as I suppose is intended by this
‘bill, of the age of eighteen years or upwards,
‘but under the age of forty, shall be register’d, in
‘pursuance of this act, and obliged to serve his
‘Majesty,

‘ Majesty, his heirs, and successors, in the royal
 ‘ navy, when, and as they respectively shall be
 ‘ summon’d or wanted thereto, by the respective
 ‘ officers, appointed and to be appointed, by vir-
 ‘ tue, and in pursuance of this act.

‘ Not satisfy’d, Sir, with the arbitrariness of
 ‘ this clause, the bill goes on farther and says,
 ‘ That if any person required, or liable to be re-
 ‘ gister’d, in pursuance, or within the meaning of
 ‘ this act, shall neglect or refuse to be register’d
 ‘ accordingly, within the times, herein after limit-
 ‘ ed; every person so offending shall be punished
 ‘ with death (being the punishment, I suppose,
 ‘ intended by this bill) so that these poor people
 ‘ are to be hanged, if they do not come of their
 ‘ own accord to be enrolled slaves.

‘ Now, Sir, I would defy even *Kouli-Can* to send
 ‘ a more arbitrary mandate to any of his conquer’d
 ‘ countries, than this bill would be, if pass’d into
 ‘ a law. But let us lay aside the enslaving part,
 ‘ and consider the consequences, that would arise
 ‘ from the bill.

‘ In the first place, all our seafaring men, who
 ‘ are naturally of a roving disposition, will, when
 ‘ under so severe a bondage, let no opportunity
 ‘ escape them, of running away from these officers,
 ‘ and of taking refuge in foreign countries, where
 ‘ there are no laws to confine them to an involun-
 ‘ tary service.

‘ In the next place, it would effectually destroy
 ‘ all future nurseries of seamen; for what parents
 ‘ will bind out their children to seafaring people,
 ‘ or to those who follow any business on the water,
 ‘ when they know it is the infallible means to en-
 ‘ slave them for the best part of their lives, and to,
 ‘ possibly, deprive themselves of support from
 ‘ their children, should they want it in their old
 ‘ age?

‘ By

‘ By these means, and the restraints likewise, by
‘ this bill laid on merchant-ships being fitted out,
‘ not only the greatest part of our foreign trade
‘ might be lost; but also, all our inland trade on
‘ navigable rivers, must suffer from the same rea-
‘ sons. And,

‘ In time of war, I dare say, no merchant-ships
‘ would be mann’d, without the owners first bri-
‘ bing one of these new-appointed officers: Nor
‘ would any one of these poor enregistered slaves
‘ ever be able to obtain leave, to go any voyage
‘ for the support of themselves and families, with-
‘ out first paying a gratuity; the bill saying, they
‘ are not to move from their places of residence,
‘ without leave of their officers.

‘ But now, Sir, let us consider, what a pret-
‘ ty parcel of officers (the chief of whom, I
‘ suppose, will be brought into Parliament, to
‘ add to the number of placemen) are to be dis-
‘ persed throughout every county in *England*, as
‘ well as in the several districts of each county,
‘ who would be as absolute there as any of the
‘ Grand Signior’s Bashaw’s; and then see, whe-
‘ ther this will not make out my second objection
‘ to this bill, *viz.* the influence they must have
‘ had on elections. For,

‘ The bill says, That all the dominions of the
‘ crown of *Great Britain* shall be divided and
‘ distinguished into different and distinct divisions;
‘ and that each of the said divisions shall, and
‘ may be subdivided, and distributed into so many
‘ inferior or suborninate districts, as the Lord
‘ High Admiral of *Great Britain*, or Commissi-
‘ oners for executing the office of Lord High
‘ Admiral of *Great Britain*, by instruments or
‘ writing under the seal of the office of Admiral-
‘ ty, shall respectively order, prescribe, direct,
‘ and appoint. This, Sir, confirms what I said,
‘ as

‘ as to the number of officers, that would be
 ‘ dispersed throughout the kingdom.

‘ Now, Sir, I shew you from the bill;
 ‘ under whose command they would have been;
 ‘ it being therein declared, That the several offi-
 ‘ cers to be appointed as aforesaid, shall from
 ‘ time to time, and at all times, be subject to the
 ‘ government, direction, superintendency, and
 ‘ controul of the Lord High Admiral, or Com-
 ‘ missioners for executing the said office; and that
 ‘ it shall be lawful for them, at all times, to no-
 ‘ minate, appoint, remove, displace, and substi-
 ‘ tute such officers and servants, as shall, to
 ‘ them, seem necessary and expedient.

‘ This, Sir, plainly makes out, that the Admi-
 ‘ ralty has the absolute command over the officers
 ‘ designed to controul these poor enregister’d
 ‘ slaves; and as no body can deny, but that the
 ‘ minister, or at least the crown, has the entire
 ‘ command of the admiralty, of consequence the
 ‘ crown would have the power to influence most
 ‘ of the elections in *England*, by causing those
 ‘ who are enregistered, and have votes for any
 ‘ county or borough, to be either sent abroad, or
 ‘ kept at home, as may best serve its purposes.
 ‘ By what I have said, I think, I have clearly de-
 ‘ monstrated the power this bill gives the crown
 ‘ over all the elections in *England*.

‘ The bill, indeed, says, That these officers
 ‘ shall always select and make choice of those,
 ‘ who, from testimonials and certificates, shall
 ‘ appear to have been longest out of the said ser-
 ‘ vice: But what penalty does the bill fix on the
 ‘ officer, if he does not? Why, none at all.
 ‘ But,

‘ Suppose there was a penalty, what would it
 ‘ signify? Would not the officer easily avoid it,
 ‘ and for the sake of a gratuity, or with a view
 ‘ to elections, let them stay at home, whose turn
 ‘ it

‘ it was to go abroad, under the pretence of be-
 ‘ ing sick or lame? The truth of which, if in-
 ‘ quired into, would always be confirmed by the
 ‘ persons favoured. Thus he would be screen’d
 ‘ from the necessity he should lie under of send-
 ‘ ing his quota of men, by supplying the defici-
 ‘ ency of these occasional sick and lame men,
 ‘ from among such as were not in turn to go into
 ‘ the service. And then, Sir, every man who
 ‘ had a vote, or who he knew would give it con-
 ‘ trary to his directions, would certainly not be
 ‘ forgot to be sent out of the way.

‘ I have taken the liberty of troubling this
 ‘ house with only two objections to this bill; but
 ‘ were it not for trespassing too much upon their
 ‘ patience, I could point them out twenty others;
 ‘ though with me, what I have already said, is
 ‘ sufficient to determine me against the commit-
 ‘ ting of a bill, the basis of which is the slavery
 ‘ of free-born subjects.’

And the inconveniencies and dangerous conse- Bill dropp’d
 quences of the bill were made so evidently appear
 by the said noble Lord, and several other worthy
 members, that when the motion was made for its
 being committed, the question was carried in the
 negative, without a division, which put an end
 to the bill. And upon this bill’s being thus
 drop’d, the house immediately resolved, That
 this house will, upon *Monday* morning next, re-
 solve itself into a committee of the whole house,
 to consider of heads of a bill for the further and
 better encouragement of seamen to enter volunta-
 rily into his Majesty’s service; in which commit-
 tee several resolutions were agreed to, but no-
 thing further done. The resolutions were as fol-
 lows, *viz.*

1. That a voluntary register of seamen will be
 of great utility to this kingdom.

3

2. That

2. That it shall extend to all the dominions of the crown of *Great Britain*.

3. That the fraternity of *Trinity-House* of *Deptford Strond* be intrusted with the management of the said register, with power of appointing inferior officers and servants, necessary for the execution of the said trust.

4. That a certain sum of money be paid to every man who is willing to register.

5. That every registered man shall be obliged to give an account of the place of his abode to the register-office.

6. That the registered men shall be divided into classes.

7. That a yearly pension be allowed to every registered man, who shall be disabled in fight, over and above such allowances as are now given, and a yearly pension to every widow of a registered man, slain in fight, over and above the present allowances made to such widow, and if the party leaves any children, that each of them have a yearly pension, until they arrive at the age of fourteen.

8. That every registered man be exempted from paying the King's or parish taxes, or serving in any parish offices, or serving in or contributing towards the militia.

9. That none be preferred to be petty officers in any of his Majesty's ships but registered men.

10. That all petty officers in merchants ships, as boatswains, gunners, &c. be chosen out of registered men.

11. That all men who shall register themselves, do remain on the register no longer than to a certain age.

12. That all men who shall have continued on the register to a certain age, do enjoy all the advantages of registered men during life.

13. That

13. That all registered men shall have the preference of being admitted into *Greenwich-Hospital*.

14. That all captains and commanders of his Majesty's ships of war, who shall be applied to in foreign parts, shall take on board any registered men, and the men so taken on board, shall from that time be deemed part of the ship's company, and receive wages accordingly.

15. That registered men be allowed to go into the merchants service, when the service of his Majesty shall not require them; and that the proper officers do give them certificates for the same.

16. That registered men be entitled to receive their wages in certain proportions.

17. That all seamen now absconding in foreign parts, or at home on account of running of goods, who shall enter on board any of his Majesty's ships, and claim the benefit of this register, shall be entitled to their pardon, except persons who have been concerned in actual murder.

18. That all registered men, who shall be summoned to appear on board any of his Majesty's ships, and shall neglect or refuse to do the same, shall be subject to be punished as deserters.

19. That all foreign seamen, who shall claim the benefit of this register, shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of natural-born subjects.

20. That the trustees of charity-schools, for the education of boys, shall be obliged to put forth apprentice to the sea service, such as shall find masters willing to take them.

21. That the registered men shall wear some honorary mark of distinction.

22. That the register-office be obliged to give an account to the Lord High Admiral, or the Commissioners for executing the office of

Lord High Admiral for the time being, of all the men that shall be registered.

23. That the register-office shall, on the receipt of an order from the Lord High Admiral, or the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral for the time being, for any number of men contained on the register, issue out their order for the said number of men to appear, according to the order directed to them, as aforesaid.

Preparatory
motions.

Thursday, February 21. The house of Commons was moved, ‘ That the address of the house
‘ to his late Majesty, (contained in the journal
‘ of the house of *March* 31, 1715.) That his said
‘ Majesty would be pleased to direct, that all powers, instructions, memorials, letters, and papers,
‘ relating to the then late negotiations of peace and
‘ commerce, and to the cessation of arms, might
‘ be laid before the house, may be read.’

Which was read accordingly; and then the house was moved, ‘ That the journal of the
‘ house of the 9th of *April* following, in relation
‘ to the appointment of a committee of secrecy,
‘ to whom the said powers, instructions, memorials, letters, and papers, then presented to the
‘ house were referred, might be read.’

Which being also read accordingly, *William Pulteney*, Esq; stood up, and spoke in substance as follows, *viz.*

Mr. Pulteney's speech
and motion
for convention papers.

‘ Mr. Speaker,
‘ Sir, For as fond as most Kings are of arbitrary power, it is certain, the Sovereign of these
‘ kingdoms is in a more happy and secure condition, than any absolute sovereign upon earth;
‘ because, by our constitution, and as long as it
‘ has

‘ has its due effect, neither the discontents nor
‘ the resentment of the people, can ever affect the
‘ throne: In absolute, as well as limited monar-
‘ chies, it is not only the duty, but the business
‘ of the Sovereign to preserve the affections and
‘ esteem of his subjects; because upon this alone
‘ his security and power must necessarily depend.
‘ I know, Sir, that in absolute monarchies, sup-
‘ ported by standing armies, the security and
‘ power of the Sovereign depends upon the army,
‘ and not upon the people; but, in such govern-
‘ ments, the people are not properly subjects:
‘ They are the mere slaves of the Sovereign and
‘ his army; and are in the same state with the
‘ *villani* in our antient constitution, who were
‘ neither allowed to have arms, nor to know the
‘ use of arms. In such governments therefore,
‘ the gentlemen of the army, and they alone,
‘ are properly to be called subjects, and upon their
‘ affections and esteem, the security and power of
‘ the Sovereign must depend; for when a discon-
‘ tent among them becomes general and violent,
‘ they mutiny, and such mutinies, as we may
‘ learn from the histories of all ages, are generally
‘ fatal to the Sovereign as well as his ministers,
‘ without making any distinction between the in-
‘ nocent and guilty. This is a danger which an
‘ absolute Sovereign must always lie exposed to,
‘ and the misfortune is, that, as none but the tools
‘ of ministers and favourites are usually allowed
‘ to approach the throne, the King knows no-
‘ thing of the discontents of his subjects, till he
‘ hears of their having thrown aside their alle-
‘ giance. Then, both his security and power
‘ must depend upon the success of his arms; and
‘ neither can be re-established, but by the death
‘ of a great number of his subjects.

‘ From hence, Sir, it is evident, that the So-
‘ vereign of these kingdoms must always be in

‘ greater security than any absolute monarch. By
‘ the constitution of our government, while it is
‘ preserved entire, the King can do no wrong.
‘ If any weak or wicked measures are pursued,
‘ his ministers only are to bear the blame. The
‘ King can never suffer by such measures, either
‘ in his person, or Royal Dignity, unless he sets
‘ himself up as the screen of his ministers, and
‘ as a buckler for defending them against the pub-
‘ lick justice of the nation, which he never can
‘ do whilst our constitution is preserved. Whilst
‘ our Parliaments are allowed to sit, and to be
‘ free and independent, they never will allow
‘ their Sovereign to take upon himself the blame
‘ of his ministers, nor will they allow discontents
‘ to grow general amongst his subjects. When
‘ discontents begin to grow general, there must
‘ have been some fault in the administration, or
‘ the people must have been mistaken or misled.
‘ If the latter of these be the case, an impartial
‘ and strict inquiry by a free and independent
‘ Parliament, will rectify the mistakes of the peo-
‘ ple, and direct their resentment against those
‘ that led them into an error. And when the dis-
‘ contents of the people proceed, as they gene-
‘ rally do, from any real weakness or wickedness
‘ in the administration of our publick affairs, an
‘ inquiry of this nature will point out to the peo-
‘ ple, the ministers that have disobliged them,
‘ and to the crown, the servants that have be-
‘ trayed it. A free and independent Parliament
‘ will not only tell the King that the people are
‘ displeased with the conduct of his ministers,
‘ but it will distinguish between the innocent and
‘ guilty. The latter it will tear from behind the
‘ throne, where such ministers always endeavour
‘ to take refuge, and thus, by clearing the
‘ throne of guilt, it will reconcile the hearts of
‘ the people to their Sovereign.

‘ In this, Sir, the superior happiness and security of the Sovereign of these kingdoms consists, and from this we may see the duty that every gentleman, as a member of this house, owes to his King as well as his country. When any gentleman of this house becomes sensible of complaints, clamours, or discontents among the people of that part of the kingdom he represents; and that those complaints, clamours, or discontents are growing general, he is, in duty to his Sovereign as well as his country, obliged to move for an inquiry into that part of the conduct of our administration, which occasioned them; and every gentleman who thinks there are any such, is obliged to join with him in the motion, even though he should think, that there is no real ground for such complaint, clamour, or discontent; because, in duty to our Sovereign, we are obliged to inform him of every discontent that arises in any part of the kingdom, and, in duty to the people, we are obliged to give them satisfaction; by punishing the guilty, if the discontent should, upon inquiry, appear to be well grounded; by convincing them of their error, if it should be found they have been deceived. This, Sir, is our duty. Upon the performance of this duty, the superior security of the Sovereign of these kingdoms depends, and therefore every gentleman of this house will certainly perform his duty in this respect, unless he be more attached to the security of the King’s minister, than to the security of the King himself. In absolute monarchies the Sovereign can expect no such security, because, no man can, in such governments, come into any of the King’s councils, but such as are recommended by the King’s first minister, if the King be weak enough to have such a one; but, as no gentleman, I hope,

T 3

‘ comes

‘ comes here by the recommendation of any mi-
‘ nister whatever, in this house his Majesty may
‘ always, I hope, depend upon an honest and
‘ fair information.

‘ This being the duty we owe both to our King
‘ and country, I must desire, that every gentleman
‘ would consider, what is said among the people,
‘ of our late convention with *Spain*, and the ne-
‘ gotiations by which we were brought into that
‘ dishonourable and ridiculous treaty. Is not that
‘ treaty condemned by every man in the nation
‘ that dares speak his mind? Did it not, as soon
‘ as it was published, raise a most general clamour
‘ in every part of the kingdom? These discon-
‘ tents at present lie smothering under the hopes
‘ of a successful war, but they are far from being
‘ removed or extinguished. The people are still
‘ convinced, that the treaty was a most destructive
‘ and dishonourable measure: That the honour of
‘ the nation was negotiated away, the just claims
‘ of our plundered merchants given up, the *South-*
‘ *Sea* company abandoned, and the freedom of
‘ our trade and navigation left in a most precarious
‘ situation; and all for the sake of furnishing
‘ some gentlemen with an excuse, for not having
‘ made the proper use of those warlike prepara-
‘ tions, which had been made at a great expence
‘ to the nation. This, Sir, is the way of think-
‘ ing amongst a great part of the people, and
‘ whilst they think so, can we suppose they will
‘ be satisfied, or that they will forgive those who
‘ led the nation into such destructive measures?
‘ These discontents do not as yet, I hope, affect
‘ the throne, but if we do not take care to re-
‘ move them, they may, they probably will;
‘ and we can remove them no other way, but by
‘ a strict and impartial inquiry into the measures
‘ that occasioned them. Whether those measures
‘ were wrong, whether the discontents of the
‘ people

‘ people be well or ill grounded, signifies nothing :
‘ It is sufficient cause for an inquiry, that there are
‘ such discontents among the people ; and that
‘ there are, I believe, no gentleman will deny.
‘ If they are well founded, we are bound, in
‘ duty to our country, to punish those that occa-
‘ sioned them, or at least to remove them from
‘ our publick councils : We are, in duty to our
‘ Sovereign, obliged to remove weak or wicked
‘ counsellors from about the throne, and to shew
‘ the people that his Majesty is not to be blamed.
‘ If these discontents are without foundation, if
‘ there was no weakness nor wickedness in our
‘ late peaceable negotiations, nor in the conven-
‘ tion, which was the issue of them, and which,
‘ I think, was the perfect picture of its parent,
‘ we shall be able, by an inquiry, to convince the
‘ people of their mistake, which will be of great
‘ advantage to us, in the prosecution of the war ;
‘ because, the people will pay their taxes with
‘ pleasure, when they consider that the publick
‘ money is under the management of those who
‘ know how to apply it, and certainly will apply
‘ it, to the best advantage ; and our armies, both
‘ by sea and land, will act with courage and ala-
‘ crity, when they have a confidence in the wis-
‘ dom and skill of those that conduct them.

‘ For this reason, Sir, if we have any regard
‘ to our Sovereign, or to the success of his arms,
‘ which are now employed, and will, I hope, be vi-
‘ gorously employed, in vindicating the honour and
‘ the rights of the nation, we ought to inquire into
‘ that part, at least, of our late conduct, which
‘ relates to the convention with *Spain* ; and there-
‘ fore, I shall conclude with a motion for having
‘ all the papers relating to that negotiation laid
‘ before the house. This motion is founded upon
‘ a very famous precedent, which has been just
‘ read to you ; and when those papers were laid
‘ before

‘ before the house, I shall then, in pursuance of
‘ the same precedent, move for having them re-
‘ ferred to a committee of secrecy; which, I
‘ think myself now obliged to give notice of, in
‘ order to obviate the objection usually made a-
‘ gainst our addressing to have such papers laid
‘ before us. As the inquiry I thus intend to
‘ move for, is founded upon so late a precedent,
‘ and a precedent too in which an honourable
‘ gentleman near me had a very great concern:
‘ As he was so zealous for inquiring into our
‘ peaceable negotiations upon that occasion, I
‘ hope he will not be against such an inquiry upon
‘ this; and really, if I were deemed worthy of
‘ giving him any advice, I should advise him to
‘ be as zealous now as he was at that time. I
‘ should advise him to be for having the inquiry
‘ carried on in the most strict manner, and by a
‘ committee of gentlemen who can be no way
‘ suspected of a dependency upon, or a partiality
‘ for any of those that were concerned in the ne-
‘ gotiating of that treaty. He has often told us,
‘ that not only the treaty itself, but every step
‘ towards concluding it, may be justified, and
‘ shewn to have been the most wise and prudent
‘ measure the nation could, at that time, pursue;
‘ and, upon such occasions, he has always arro-
‘ gated to himself the sole honour of that mea-
‘ sure. As to the wisdom and prudence of the
‘ measure, he must be sensible that a great part
‘ of the nation differ in opinion from him. He
‘ must know, that not only the treaty, but the
‘ negotiations which ended in that treaty, or ra-
‘ ther in the war which was the natural conse-
‘ quence of it; for the treaty itself was rather the
‘ beginning, than the end of a negotiation: I
‘ say, he must know, that both the treaty and
‘ the previous negotiations were, and are still,
‘ condemned by a great part of the nation; and
‘ therefore,

‘ therefore, if he was the sole author and adviser,
‘ in order to vindicate his character, he must be
‘ for a strict and impartial inquiry ; because this is
‘ the only way of refuting the objections made to
‘ his conduct.

‘ But, Sir, as I always had, and have still a
‘ bad opinion of the treaty, as well as the pre-
‘ vious negotiations, I am willing to suppose, the
‘ honourable gentleman was not the sole author
‘ and adviser of either ; and, by the nature of
‘ his office, he could not be the conductor : He
‘ went very far out of his province, if he had
‘ any thing more to do, either with the treaty or
‘ the negotiations that preceded it, than simply
‘ giving his opinion, as one of his Majesty’s ca-
‘ binet council ; for, I hope, his Majesty’s cabi-
‘ net council does not consist solely in his person ;
‘ and therefore, I think, it is very much his inte-
‘ rest to have that affair strictly and impartially in-
‘ quired into, in order to convince the world,
‘ that he had not near so great a hand in it, as he
‘ is now generally supposed to have had. Thus,
‘ Sir, let the honourable gentleman near me con-
‘ sider the convention in what light he will, let
‘ him consider it as a good thing, in which he had
‘ the honour of being the chief person concern-
‘ ed ; let him consider it as a bad thing, in which
‘ he had no more concern than what belonged to
‘ him, it is his interest to have the affair inquired
‘ into ; and, considering the general reproach it
‘ has occasioned, I have shewn that it is his duty ;
‘ so that I cannot but expect his concurrence in
‘ the motion I am to make. I can conceive no
‘ reason for his being against it, unless he be not
‘ only conscious that the convention was a wick-
‘ ed treaty, but also that he was, contrary to the
‘ nature of his office, and inconsistently with the
‘ constitution of our government, the chief con-
‘ ductor, as well as the sole adviser of it.

‘ I hope, Sir, the house will pardon me, for
‘ taking up your time with shewing so particularly
‘ my reasons why the honourable gentleman near
‘ me should concur with me in the motion I am
‘ to make. My reason for doing so may be easily
‘ guessed at; and, as for the other gentlemen
‘ now in this house, who may have had some
‘ share in those negotiations, or in advising that
‘ treaty, if there are any such, I am sure they
‘ ought, for the sake of their own characters, to
‘ promote an inquiry into that affair, if they really
‘ think it will bear being examined. As for my
‘ own part, I shall freely own, that, in my opi-
‘ nion, both the treaty itself, and the negotiations
‘ that preceded it, deserve to be, and, I believe,
‘ upon a strict examination, will be as explicitly
‘ condemned by Parliament, as they have already
‘ been by the nation. The treaty of *Utrecht*,
‘ considering the success of our arms, was a bad
‘ treaty: Our first negotiations, which afterwards
‘ produced that treaty, were scandalous and dis-
‘ honourable, because they were separate and
‘ distinct from our allies in the war; but when
‘ this treaty, and these negotiations, are compared
‘ with our late negotiations in *Spain*, and the con-
‘ vention that was the consequence of them, if
‘ the authors and advisers of the latter escape
‘ punishment, the authors and advisers of the
‘ former deserve our thanks. Therefore, if the
‘ weakness or wickedness of any treaty or nego-
‘ tiation, can be a reason for a parliamentary in-
‘ quiry, we have more reason to inquire into our
‘ late convention and negotiations with *Spain*,
‘ than we had to inquire into the treaty of
‘ *Utrecht*, and the negotiations that preceded it;
‘ and, if the discontents of the people be a rea-
‘ son for inquiring into any publick transaction,
‘ I am sure we have more reason to inquire into
‘ our

‘ our late convention with *Spain*, than we ever
‘ had to inquire into the treaty of *Utrecht*.
‘ The latter was very far from having raised
‘ a general discontent: It was, ’tis true, con-
‘ demned by most of the men of superior
‘ knowledge and sense in the nation, but it
‘ was approved by such as do not consider the
‘ remote consequences of things; and, if we in-
‘ clude the populace, I may say, it was approved
‘ by a majority of the nation: Whereas our late
‘ convention with *Spain* was not, I am convinced,
‘ approved by any man of sense in the nation,
‘ except those only who were governed by private
‘ and selfish motives of their own; and the disho-
‘ nour and disadvantages of it were so apparent,
‘ that it was exclaimed against by all ranks and
‘ degrees of men.

‘ I hope, Sir, it will not be urged against my
‘ motion, that the convention was approved of
‘ by Parliament; for suppose it had been ap-
‘ proved of in the most plain and express terms
‘ in last session of Parliament, it can be no argu-
‘ ment against inquiring into it, or condemning it
‘ in this. The treaty of *Utrecht* had been ap-
‘ proved of in the most express terms by the very
‘ next preceding session of Parliament, and yet,
‘ we find, it was inquired into, and not only ex-
‘ pressly condemned, but the authors and advisers
‘ of it punished, in what I may properly call the
‘ very next ensuing session. But the convention
‘ was so far from being expressly approved in last
‘ session, that it was with great difficulty, and by
‘ a small majority, it met with any sort of appro-
‘ bation. Nay, I am convinced, if the argu-
‘ ment had then rested upon the single merits of
‘ the treaty, it would have met with an express
‘ condemnation. But as peace is a desirable thing,
‘ and as gentlemen were afraid, that by condemn-
‘ ing the convention they would prevent the con-
‘ clusion

‘ clusion of that treaty of peace they were made
‘ to hope for, and might thereby involve the
‘ nation in a war, therefore, to avoid the impu-
‘ tation of being the authors of a war, they were
‘ against condemning the treaty in Parliament,
‘ though they could not but condemn it in their
‘ hearts. This, I verily believe, was the way of
‘ thinking with many gentlemen who voted for
‘ the address then proposed ; and as those gentle-
‘ men are now free from such fears, as they may
‘ now consider the convention, and give their
‘ sentiments of it freely, and upon its own merits,
‘ I have reason to hope, they will not only join
‘ with me in moving for the papers relating to it,
‘ but also in moving for having those papers
‘ referred to a committee of secrefry ; for if the
‘ treaty deserved last year to have been condemn-
‘ ed upon its own merits, it must now deserve
‘ more to be so, since it has failed of producing
‘ the only good thing those gentlemen could ex-
‘ pect from it. Nay, such gentlemen have, I
‘ think, more reason than others to have the trea-
‘ ty inquired into, and either vindicated or con-
‘ demned ; because they were last year induced,
‘ by false hopes, and arrogant assurances, to give
‘ a sort of approbation to what had been con-
‘ demned by the majority of the nation, and
‘ what they could not, in their own consciences,
‘ directly approve.

‘ But suppose, Sir, there may be some gentlemen
‘ in this house who did approve, and still do ap-
‘ prove of the convention, as well as the negotia-
‘ tions previous to it ; and suppose, as the honour-
‘ able gentleman near me has often said, that both
‘ may be fully justified, surely no man who thinks
‘ so can be against our taking the most proper me-
‘ thod for bringing the nation into their way of
‘ thinking. The desire of bringing others into our
‘ opinion is so natural to mankind, that no man
‘ will

' will refuse doing it, when he has a proper op-
 ' portunity for that purpose; and as the discontents
 ' of the nation still run very high against that
 ' treaty, and those negotiations, I have shewn,
 ' that it is the duty of every member of this house
 ' to endeavour to remove them, by taking the
 ' most proper method for shewing the people their
 ' mistake, and that they have no reason to be dis-
 ' satisfied with either. Thus if we approve of the
 ' convention, we ought to inquire into it: If we
 ' do not approve of the convention, we ought to
 ' inquire into it; and therefore, let gentlemen pre-
 ' tend what they will, I cannot suppose that my
 ' motion will be opposed by any, but such as are
 ' conscious of the weakness or wickedness of that
 ' measure, and are against its being inquired into
 ' by Parliament, lest they or their friends, who
 ' had a hand in that treaty, should be thereby
 ' brought to suffer the punishment they deserve;
 ' but as the number of such gentlemen is not, I
 ' hope, very great in this house, therefore, I
 ' think, I may make my motion with some confi-
 ' dence of success; and that there may be no ob-
 ' jection made to the form of it, I have drawn it
 ' up in the very words of the first motion made
 ' for enquiring into the treaty of *Utrecht*. My
 ' motion therefore is, That an humble address be
 ' presented to his Majesty, that he will be gra-
 ' ciously pleased to give directions to the proper
 ' officers to lay before this house, all the powers,
 ' instructions, memorials, letters, and papers, re-
 ' lating to the convention between *Great Britain*
 ' and *Spain*, concluded at the *Pardo*, *Jan. 14,*
 ' *1739.* N. S.'

A motion was then made, ' That his late Ma-
 ' jesty's most gracious speech to both houses of
 ' Parliament, relating to the conclusion of the war,
 ' and the attempts to defeat the Protestant succe-
 ' sion; together with the address of the house of
 ' Commons

Another
 preparatory
 motion.

‘ Commons to his said Majesty thereupon, contained in the journal of that house, of the 23d and 24th days of *March* 1714, might be read.’

And the same being read accordingly, Sir *Robert Walpole* stood up and spoke to this effect:

‘ Mr. Speaker,

Sir Robert
Walpole's
speech
against Mr.
Pulteney's
motion.

‘ Sir, Of all the duties incumbent upon us as members of this house, there is not one more necessary than that of supporting his Majesty in the prosecution of the present war, and avoiding every thing that may interrupt him, or any of those employed by him, in that prosecution. The gentlemen that were concerned in advising and conducting our late negotiations with *Spain*, or in concluding the late convention, are not, I am very sure, in the least afraid of a fair and impartial inquiry into that whole affair, or of having all the papers relating to it laid before this assembly; but if such an inquiry were to be set on foot, they would have reason to be afraid of an unfair and partial inquiry into their conduct: I say, Sir, they would have reason to be afraid, for though such a thing be improbable, it must be allowed to be possible; and a bare possibility is, in such a case, a sufficient ground of fear. This must of course give them a good deal of uneasiness, and put them to an infinite deal of trouble, as we may most rationally conclude, from the loads of papers we have already upon our table, relating to those transactions. These, and a great many more, the gentlemen concerned, and their friends, must carefully review, for otherwise their enemies might, from some of the papers, pick objections to their conduct, which, without examining other papers, might appear feasible and well grounded; from whence we must perceive, what an infinite trouble the gentlemen concerned in those transactions
‘ must

‘ must be put to by such an inquiry; and this
‘ trouble no gentleman can in justice resolve to
‘ put them to, unless he suspects, at least, their
‘ having been guilty of very great enormities.

‘ From this consideration, Sir, which will hold
‘ good in all cases as well as this, we ought to lay
‘ it down for a rule of our conduct in this house,
‘ never to subject any man to the trouble and
‘ danger of an inquiry, unless we think, we have
‘ good reason to suspect his having been guilty of
‘ some very great weakness, or some real crime,
‘ in the affair he had under his management. This
‘ ought in all cases, and at all times, to be our
‘ rule of conduct; but in the present case, and at
‘ the present time, we are more than ordinary un-
‘ der an obligation to follow it; because we are
‘ now engaged in an expensive war, and a war
‘ which may become dangerous as well as expen-
‘ sive; and because some of those gentlemen that
‘ had a hand in advising or conducting our peace-
‘ able negotiations, are now employed by his Ma-
‘ jesty in advising or conducting the measures pro-
‘ per to be taken for a vigorous prosecution of the
‘ war: This every one knows to be our case at
‘ present, and without compliment, I think, I
‘ may say, these gentlemen are the most proper to
‘ be employed; because they must be supposed to
‘ be the most sensibly touched with the shifts and
‘ chicanes of *Spain*, and the most thoroughly ac-
‘ quainted with the affairs and present situation of
‘ that nation: Their resentment will prompt them
‘ to carry on the war with the utmost vigour, and
‘ their knowledge will direct them how to carry it
‘ on with the greatest success. Therefore, of all
‘ things, we ought, at present, to avoid entering
‘ upon an inquiry into their past conduct, unless
‘ we are fully convinced of their having been guil-
‘ ty of some egregious weakness or gross fault;
‘ and, if none but those who think so will join
‘ with

‘ with the honourable gentleman in his motion, I
‘ believe, it will not meet with that success he
‘ seems to expect.

‘ A popular discontent or clamour, when it be-
‘ comes general, and is entertained by men of sense
‘ and figure, as well as by the vulgar and ignorant,
‘ is a misfortune, I shall readily grant, Sir, which
‘ ought never to be neglected by this house.
‘ This is what will never, I believe, admit of a
‘ dispute amongst us; but the dispute generally
‘ is, whether the discontent be general, and by
‘ what sort of people it is entertained; and, in
‘ this, most gentlemen without doors pass their
‘ judgment according to the company they keep,
‘ and the place they chiefly reside in; but this, I
‘ am sure, is far from being a right way of judg-
‘ ing within. We are here, Sir, the representa-
‘ tives of the whole nation: We are here to
‘ judge, as the majority of the nation ought,
‘ and may be supposed to judge; and, as it is
‘ impossible for any one member of this house to
‘ know the particular sentiments of every man in
‘ the nation, he must form to himself some other
‘ method of judging. The only sure method he
‘ can, for this purpose, lay down, is, to consider
‘ the affair in question, and to suppose that the
‘ majority of the nation, at least the majority of
‘ men of sense or figure, are upon the right side
‘ of the question. To apply this rule to the case
‘ in hand: We are not to suppose, much less
‘ judge, that the majority of the nation are dissa-
‘ tisfied with the late convention, because we find
‘ the majority of those we converse with dissatis-
‘ fied with it; nor are we to suppose, that the
‘ majority of the nation are pleased with it, be-
‘ cause, the majority of those we converse with,
‘ are so; but, we are to consider the convention
‘ itself, with all the circumstances attending it,
‘ and, if we are from thence convinced, that it
‘ was

‘ was a good thing at the time it was made, we
‘ ought to suppose, that most men of figure
‘ and sense in the kingdom approve of it.

‘ This is the only method, Sir, by which, as
‘ members of this house, we ought to judge,
‘ what are the sentiments of the majority of the
‘ nation ; and according to this method, I must
‘ suppose, that the majority of the nation nei-
‘ ther were, nor are dissatisfied with the late
‘ convention between us and *Spain*, because, I
‘ think, they neither had, nor have any reason
‘ to be so. His Majesty was certainly in the
‘ right to try all peaceable methods for bringing
‘ the court of *Spain* to hear reason, before he re-
‘ solved on having recourse to arms : This was
‘ the repeated advice of his Parliament ; and,
‘ his following this advice, shewed his regard to
‘ the trade and happiness of his subjects. The
‘ court of *Spain* had, for some years, amused
‘ him with promises, and with protestations that
‘ they were ready to settle all disputes in an ami-
‘ cable manner ; and, the best way for putting
‘ these protestations to the proof, was to bring
‘ them to some one point, which must necessari-
‘ ly be performed in a few months. The point
‘ fixed on by his Majesty for this purpose was,
‘ their making good the damages our merchants
‘ had sustained. This they promised, by the
‘ convention, to do in a very short time ; and,
‘ if they had performed this promise, it would
‘ have been a good pledge for their sincerity in
‘ the future negotiation. If the convention, Sir,
‘ had been a definitive treaty : If, by such a trea-
‘ ty, nothing had been obtained but a reparation
‘ for past damages, without any stipulation for
‘ future security, I shall grant, it would have
‘ been a bad treaty. But, as the convention was
‘ designed only by way of preliminary, and as
‘ immediate reparation for all past damages was

‘ stipulated, in order to put the sincerity of the
 ‘ *Spanish* court to the test, I must still think it
 ‘ was the wisest and the best method we could
 ‘ take, for avoiding the imputation of involving
 ‘ ourselves rashly in war, and, at the same time,
 ‘ for preventing its being in the power of the
 ‘ court of *Spain* to amuse us longer with empty
 ‘ promises, or deceitful protestations.

‘ This is the only true light, Sir, in which
 ‘ the convention can be considered ; and, when
 ‘ I consider it in this light, I cannot suppose,
 ‘ that any impartial man of sense in the king-
 ‘ dom ever did, or can now find fault with it, or
 ‘ with the negotiations that preceded it ; and as
 ‘ I shall always take the sense of Parliament to
 ‘ be the sense of the nation, that is to say, of
 ‘ the majority of those whose opinions we ought
 ‘ to regard, this treaty, and all the previous ne-
 ‘ gotiations, having met with the approbation of
 ‘ Parliament, I must, from thence likewise, con-
 ‘ clude that they were, and still are approved by
 ‘ the majority of those that make any sort of
 ‘ figure in their country. The mere populace,
 ‘ indeed, in all countries, are fond of war, be-
 ‘ cause they can lose nothing, and some of them
 ‘ generally make their fortunes by war ; there-
 ‘ fore, we ought not to wonder, if they find
 ‘ fault with every measure that is taken for a-
 ‘ voiding a war, which, though it be their de-
 ‘ light, must be allowed to be a publick calami-
 ‘ ty ; and the natural inclinations of the popu-
 ‘ lace in this kingdom, were roused and inflamed
 ‘ by our merchants and seamen who had suffered
 ‘ by the *Spanish* depredations, and who were go-
 ‘ verned by their private resentment, and not by
 ‘ any publick regard for the good of their coun-
 ‘ try ; but, I hope, it will not be alledged, that
 ‘ a war ought to have been entered into, merely
 ‘ for the sake of giving such men satisfaction,

‘ or that this house ought to enter upon an in-
‘ quiry, merely for the sake of putting an end
‘ to such discontents. Besides, even these dis-
‘ contents cannot now be insisted on as a good
‘ foundation for an inquiry, because they are
‘ really now at an end. His Majesty’s declara-
‘ tion of war put a final end to them, as we
‘ have often been told, even by those that seem
‘ to patronize this motion. An inquiry, indeed,
‘ may, nay, I am convinced, will revive them;
‘ because it will be impossible to convince men
‘ who judge so partially, and, I may say, self-
‘ ishly, that any measure for preventing the war
‘ was right, or that the advisers and conductors
‘ of such measures ought not to be punished;
‘ and, as I cannot suppose, that this house will
‘ punish gentlemen who shall, upon an inquiry,
‘ be found, through the whole tenor of their
‘ conduct, to have had a true regard to the inte-
‘ rest of the nation in general; I must con-
‘ clude, that the inquiry proposed will, proba-
‘ bly, end in reviving those ill-grounded popular
‘ clamours, with the additional misfortune, that
‘ this house will then share in the supposed guilt
‘ of our ministers and negotiators.

‘ Thus I have shewn, Sir, that a parliamenta-
‘ ry inquiry into our late negotiations with *Spain*,
‘ would be dangerous, because it would, proba-
‘ bly, revive the discontents and clamours,
‘ groundlessly, in my opinion, raised against those
‘ negotiations: That such an inquiry would be
‘ prejudicial, because it would interrupt us in the
‘ prosecution of the war; and that it ought
‘ neither to be insisted on, nor agreed to, by
‘ any but those who are fully convinced, that
‘ the gentlemen who were concerned in advising
‘ and carrying on those negotiations, were guilty
‘ of great failings and enormities. As I am none
‘ of these, after thanking the honourable gentle-

‘ man for the piece of advice he was pleased to
‘ direct, as I imagine, in particular to me, I
‘ must beg his pardon for not following his coun-
‘ sel. If I were the only person concerned, I
‘ should be very ready to take his advice : I should
‘ be ready, and shall always be ready to submit
‘ any part of my conduct to a fair and impar-
‘ tial inquiry ; but, I cannot make so free with
‘ the conduct of other gentlemen. I cannot
‘ give my consent for subjecting them to the
‘ trouble and danger of a parliamentary trial,
‘ when I do not think there is the least ground
‘ for suspecting their having been guilty of any
‘ fault, and much less of any crime. By a for-
‘ mal trial, the most innocent man must certain-
‘ ly be put to great trouble, and he must al-
‘ ways be exposed to the danger of mistakes,
‘ misapprehensions, or partialities, on the part
‘ of those that are to be his judges : We have
‘ often heard of innocent mens being con-
‘ demned ; and therefore, I shall never think it
‘ just in me to give my vote for exposing a man
‘ to that danger, when I am fully convinced of
‘ his innocence.

‘ With regard to the precedent upon which
‘ the honourable gentleman has been pleased to
‘ found his motion, it may be a precedent as to
‘ the forms of proceeding, but it can be no pre-
‘ cedent as to the merits of the case. Will any
‘ gentleman say, that because we inquired into
‘ the treaty of *Utrecht*, therefore we ought to in-
‘ quire into the late convention between *Spain*
‘ and us ? Is there any parallel between the two
‘ treaties ? Is there any parallel between the cir-
‘ cumstances of this nation, or the circumstances
‘ of *Europe*, at these two periods ? Is there any
‘ parallel between the persons concerned in ne-
‘ gotiating these two treaties ? Can the conven-
‘ tion be suspected of any such latent design as
‘ the

‘ the treaty of *Utrecht* was, strongly, and with
‘ great reason, suspected of? I am really surpris-
‘ zed, Sir, to hear the inquiry into the treaty of
‘ *Utrecht* brought as a precedent, or an authority,
‘ for what is now proposed. If it was men-
‘ tioned as a proof, that the Parliament has a
‘ right to inquire into any treaty or publick trans-
‘ action, it was quite needless to bring a precedent
‘ or proof for this purpose, because it is what no
‘ man will now, thank God! deny. But if our
‘ having inquired into that treaty was mentioned
‘ as an argument for our inquiring into this, it is,
‘ I think, one of the most inconclusive argu-
‘ ments that was ever made use of in any debate.
‘ The treaty of *Utrecht* was a most dishonourable
‘ treaty, at the end of a most successful war:
‘ The convention was only a preliminary, or an
‘ attempt to prevent a dangerous war. At the
‘ time of the treaty of *Utrecht*, the circumstances
‘ of *Europe* were in the most happy situation for
‘ this nation, and our enemies were, in some mea-
‘ sure, at our mercy, if we had not entirely
‘ confounded this happy state of our affairs, by
‘ deserting our allies at that critical juncture:
‘ Whereas, at the time of the late convention,
‘ the circumstances of *Europe* were in no very
‘ happy situation for us, and, I am sure, it can-
‘ not be said, that those we might then reasonably
‘ expect to be our enemies, were in any measure
‘ at our mercy. The treaty of *Utrecht* was con-
‘ certed, negotiated, and concluded, by those
‘ who were known, I may almost say, declared
‘ enemies to the Protestant establishment; and
‘ there was a violent suspicion, that in the nego-
‘ tiating of that treaty, there was an under-hand
‘ plot for overturning that establishment, and
‘ placing the Pretender upon the throne of these
‘ kingdoms: Can it be said, that the late conven-
‘ tion was negotiated by such men? Can it be
‘ suspected;

‘ suspected, that any such plot was carried on un-
‘ der the cloak of that negotiation? Besides these
‘ differences in the two treaties, and the circum-
‘ stances that attend them, there was a very ma-
‘ terial difference in the approbation the two have
‘ met with. The treaty of *Utrecht* was, ’tis true,
‘ approved of by Parliament, but it was by a
‘ new Parliament, and a Parliament generally
‘ composed of men of a different complexion,
‘ that it was inquired into and condemned:
‘ Whereas the convention was approved of by
‘ this very Parliament; and I cannot think, it
‘ would add much to the credit or dignity of
‘ Parliaments, to see a treaty condemned in one
‘ session, which had been approved of in the very
‘ next preceding session of the same Parliament.
‘ For my part, I cannot see, how any gentleman
‘ can, this session, vote for an inquiry into a trea-
‘ ty, which last session he so far approved of, as
‘ to advise his Majesty to proceed upon the foot-
‘ ing of that treaty; for, I hope, no gentleman
‘ will, after what I have said, vote for inquiring
‘ into a treaty which, he thinks, he has no reason
‘ to condemn; and therefore, I am convinced,
‘ no gentleman will vote for this motion, who
‘ agreed to the address, last year, upon our taking
‘ the treaty into our consideration.

‘ From what I have said, Sir, I hope, it is
‘ evident, the inquiry into the treaty of *Utrecht*
‘ can be no precedent, or argument, for what is
‘ now proposed. I have often, indeed, heard
‘ precedents quoted in this house, which, I
‘ thought, had very little relation to the case in
‘ hand; but I never heard a precedent quoted,
‘ which I thought less *à propos* than the present.
‘ The inquiry into the treaty of *Utrecht* can no
‘ more be brought as a precedent, or an argu-
‘ ment, for inquiring into the late convention,
‘ than it can be brought as a precedent, or
‘ argument,

‘ argument, for our inquiring into the grand alli-
 ‘ ance; therefore, the honourable gentleman’s
 ‘ motion must rest entirely upon the opinion we
 ‘ have of the gentlemen concerned in advising
 ‘ or conducting our late negotiations with *Spain*,
 ‘ and upon the opinion we have of the fitness of
 ‘ the present time for setting on foot an inquiry
 ‘ into their conduct. As I have a very good
 ‘ opinion of the gentlemen concerned: As, I
 ‘ think, there is nothing appears, either from the
 ‘ convention, or from the papers already before
 ‘ us, that can in the least impeach their conduct;
 ‘ and as, I think, this is not a fit time for in-
 ‘ quiring into it if there did, I shall, therefore,
 ‘ be against the motion, and, I hope, every gen-
 ‘ tleman that thinks as I do, will join with me in
 ‘ putting a negative upon it.’

The last speech we shall give upon this occa-
 sion, was that made by *George Lyttleton*, Esq;
 which was to this effect, *viz.*

‘ Mr. Speaker,

‘ Sir, I think it my duty to be warmly for this
 ‘ inquiry: I think it my duty, not upon the
 ‘ principle of a Whig, or of a Tory, but upon a
 ‘ much better principle than either, a principle of
 ‘ love to my country, superior infinitely to any
 ‘ party names or distinctions. But I am not in
 ‘ the least surprized, that some gentlemen should
 ‘ be very unwilling we should look back to the
 ‘ transactions that preceded the war: Transac-
 ‘ tions, which, for the honour of the nation,
 ‘ one ought to wish might sink in oblivion, if,
 ‘ while we are smarting with the effects, it was
 ‘ possible for us not to remember the cause; and,
 ‘ indeed, I believe, that such a retrospect would
 ‘ be painful enough to us all; for who can be
 ‘ easy, that considers from what a precipice we

Mr. Lyttle-
 ton's speech.

‘ lately escaped, and that those who drove so near
‘ to it, have the reins still in their hands? But
‘ unpleasant as it is to look back, it is the proper
‘ business of Parliament: It is our duty to look
‘ back, that we may know the better how to
‘ look forwards, that we may understand the full
‘ merit of our minister’s services, and suit our ex-
‘ pectations of the future, to our sense of the
‘ past.

‘ It has been said, that this treaty, we wou’d
‘ inquire into, has been approved by this Parlia-
‘ ment. Sir, I will be bold to say, it has been
‘ condemned in effect by the King himself, and
‘ by the whole legislature. I will be bold to say,
‘ there is not one word in his Majesty’s declara-
‘ tion of war, not one word in any resolution, in
‘ any address, or in any act of Parliament for
‘ supporting the war, that is not directly opposite
‘ to the principle upon which the convention was
‘ built, upon which all our measures, all our ne-
‘ gotiations were founded, as long as the genius
‘ of our ministers prevailed over the spirit and
‘ sense of the nation. Sir, the principle of the
‘ war is to consider our right, *not to be searched*,
‘ as an indubitable claim, that will not admit of
‘ any discussion: The principle of all these nego-
‘ tiations, and of the convention itself, was to
‘ consider it as a matter that required to be dis-
‘ cussed, and to be regulated; and would to
‘ God, Sir, we had gone no farther in the course
‘ of those able negotiations: But it is a melan-
‘ choly truth, which can be proved from papers
‘ now on your table, that for many years toge-
‘ ther, there was hardly a letter written by our
‘ ministers, a demand made by them, or a plan
‘ of accommodation proposed, or accepted, which
‘ did not evidently tend to weaken our own right,
‘ and strengthen our enemy’s, by some new mis-
‘ taken conception in their unwarrantable, ground-
‘ less

‘ less pretensions. Nay, so late as in *Decem-*
‘ *ber* 1737, we contended with our whole
‘ strength, that the regulations laid down in
‘ the treaty of 1667, with regard to searching in
‘ the seas of *Europe* for contraband goods, should
‘ be deemed to extend to *America*, and observed
‘ there, in searching our ships. What a condi-
‘ tion had we been in, how grossly entrap’d by
‘ our own astonishing ignorance, if *Spain* had
‘ taken us at our word, and allowed the demand!
‘ With what grace, after that, could we have
‘ presumed to talk of no search? But luckily for
‘ us, the *Spanish* minister served us a great deal
‘ better than our own: He was so good to teach
‘ us, how to understand our own treaties; and
‘ so, at last, we saw our error, and set the dis-
‘ pute on its proper foundation. Are not these,
‘ matters that deserve to be look’d into a little
‘ more closely? Is not here, business sufficient to
‘ employ a secret committee?

‘ Sir, is it enough for a ministry to declare
‘ themselves honest, and wise; and are we to
‘ take their words for it, against such terrible
‘ grounds of suspicion? Sir, I own myself very
‘ unfit to judge for gentlemen in an administra-
‘ tion; but, if I could form any judgment, how
‘ they ought to conduct themselves, I should
‘ think, the throwing out daily defiance to find
‘ any fault with them, and then denying all
‘ means of inquiry, must be very bad policy;
‘ because, it is so far from looking like innocence,
‘ that it gives the strongest suspicion of guilt.
‘ When King *Charles* I. told the Commons,
‘ (who were preparing complaints against *Buck-*
‘ *ingham*) That he would not allow any of his
‘ servants to be questioned in Parliament, he
‘ spoke the language of despotick power, and
‘ such as this house would never endure. But if,
‘ instead of speaking so openly, he had a little
‘ softened

‘ softned his stile, confessed their right to question
 ‘ his servants, but at the same time denied them
 ‘ the means: If *Buckingham* himself had chal-
 ‘ lenged them to examine his conduct, or the
 ‘ conduct of those who acted by his instructions,
 ‘ and under his orders; and then refused them
 ‘ the sight of those instructions, and the regular
 ‘ methods, according to the usage of Parliament,
 ‘ of examining into those orders; the appearance,
 ‘ indeed, would have been fairer, but the pro-
 ‘ ceeding itself would have been equally danger-
 ‘ ous, equally fatal to the rights of this house.

‘ Sir, that Parliament would not have bore it;
 ‘ for it was composed of such men, as had no
 ‘ influence upon them, to abate the spirit and
 ‘ zeal with which they proceeded to inquire into,
 ‘ and punish mal-administration: Such men, as at
 ‘ their first meeting, before they would give one
 ‘ penny of money, to support the King in a war
 ‘ with *Spain*, which had been begun at the desire
 ‘ of Parliament, appointed a committee to confi-
 ‘ der of secret affairs, and another committee for
 ‘ grievances. You will find them upon their
 ‘ journals: The neglect of guarding the seas:
 ‘ The misemployment of the publick treasure;
 ‘ and the dishonour brought upon the nation.
 ‘ These they resolved to inquire into before they
 ‘ voted any supply, without apprehending any
 ‘ reproach of want of zeal for the King, or the
 ‘ war; but that they might know the true state
 ‘ of the nation, and carry on the war with more
 ‘ chearfulness, when justice was done upon those
 ‘ who had involved them in so many difficulties.
 ‘ The same Parliament declared, and it stands un-
 ‘ controverted yet upon your journals, “ That
 ‘ common fame is a good ground of proceeding
 ‘ for this house, either by inquiry, or, if the
 ‘ house find cause, by impeachment.” Accord-
 ‘ ingly, queries were drawn up, to inquire into
 ‘ the

‘ the conduct of *Buckingham*, which were after-
‘ wards turned into articles of impeachment a-
‘ gainst him, and the King, to save his minister,
‘ had no other way than dissolving that Parlia-
‘ ment; for the art of softning them by corrup-
‘ tion was not in use in those days.

‘ Sir, I hope, I have not mispent your time in
‘ calling back to your memory the proceedings of
‘ a former house of Commons, which deserve, I
‘ think, the greatest respect, and are mentioned
‘ with reverence by the most impartial historians.
‘ How history will mention ours, I wish, we may
‘ think worth our concern; but how the nation
‘ will judge of them now, I am sure, we ought
‘ to consider. Sir, if a King has lost the esteem
‘ and the hearts of his people, the interposition of
‘ Parliament may awaken him to a sense of his
‘ error, and by healing counsels, reconcile, and
‘ restore them again; but if Parliaments themselves
‘ act so as to lose their own dignity, and, by con-
‘ sequence, the esteem and love of the people,
‘ who shall then interpose, or what mediator is
‘ left? It is such an evil as admits of no remedy:
‘ It is the worst misfortune that can ever befall a
‘ free government.

‘ To have approved the convention; to have
‘ rejected a motion for laying before Parliament,
‘ the instructions of the minister, who concluded,
‘ and signed that convention; and then to deny
‘ the means of examining into those negotiations,
‘ upon which *Spain* grounds those very preten-
‘ sions, that we are fighting now to destroy, will
‘ certainly do us great honour in the opinion of
‘ those, who are this year to pay four millions for
‘ supporting the war. What they will think of all
‘ this, I do not know; but, I am apt to believe,
‘ they will never think about it, without having
‘ it at the same time in their thoughts, that the
‘ same

‘ same house of Commons has three times rejected
‘ the place-bill.’

Upon this motion the question was carried in the negative.

Monday, February 25, the house having resolved itself into a committee of the whole house, to consider further of the supply granted to his Majesty, the Lord *Baltimore* stood up, and after having explained what was meant by the ordinary of the navy, and the nature and meaning of the several articles of that estimate, his Lordship proceeded thus:

Lord *Balti-*
more's speech
against the
ordinary
estimate of
the navy,

‘ Sir, I have dwelt thus long upon these ar-
‘ ticles, not from vanity or ostentation of greater
‘ knowledge and sagacity than other gentlemen
‘ are possessed of, but from a conviction of the
‘ usefulness of the subject, and the necessity of
‘ making it more generally studied and understood.
‘ Gentlemen have hitherto continued strangers to
‘ it, not that it requires any intense application, or
‘ exalted abilities, but because the circumstances
‘ of their lives, and situation of their affairs, have
‘ afforded them no opportunity of conversing with
‘ seamen, or obtaining any information of maritime
‘ affairs; and perhaps, as in every other profession,
‘ the folly of some who could not, and the artifi-
‘ ces of others who would not explain them, have
‘ raised a mist before this easy part of knowledge,
‘ and made what is plain and obvious in itself,
‘ appear difficult, intricate, and unattainable, with-
‘ out long personal practice and experience. But
‘ this ignorance, Sir, however excusable, has had
‘ very dangerous consequences, it has given the
‘ commissioners and officers of the navy an autho-
‘ rity without limits, it has given them a power
‘ which Majesty itself has always been denied, of
‘ disposing

‘ disposing of the publick money without a reason
‘ for their demands, and without an account of their
‘ expences. Gentlemen have been ashamed to de-
‘ ny the supplies which were required as necessary,
‘ without assigning a reason for their refusal, and
‘ have been afraid of attempting to reason upon a
‘ subject which they had not studied, and which
‘ they might think impossible for them to study
‘ with success. If I have contributed to dissipate
‘ this artificial cloud, if I have shown that this,
‘ like almost every other part of publick business,
‘ is clear and easy in its own nature, and obscure
‘ only by false representations, I have done at least
‘ some service to my country.

‘ But it is time, Sir, that, having explained the
‘ articles, I should say something of the expence
‘ of each, as it is here computed; for, to what
‘ other purpose are these estimates laid before us?
‘ An estimate admitted without examination, is to
‘ us, and to the nation, nothing else than a gene-
‘ ral demand complied with upon the mere credit
‘ of those that make it.

‘ The estimate of the navy is, according to this
‘ computation, lower indeed than that which was
‘ laid before us the last session, and this diminu-
‘ tion, I suppose, is imagined sufficient to satisfy
‘ us, as it is presumed that we shall be too much
‘ pleased with seeing any demand upon the nation
‘ growing less, to inquire minutely whether it be
‘ lessened in proportion to the expence which it
‘ proposes to defray. For minute examinations,
‘ there is, indeed, no occasion. Should the num-
‘ ber of ships now in commission be compared
‘ with the list of last year, it will be found, at
‘ the first inspection, that the computation is not
‘ in the same proportion with the last, so that
‘ profusion is brought in upon us under the dis-
‘ guise of frugality. The whole sum then de-
‘ manded was but 31,000*l*. and the late conside-
‘ rable

‘ rable diminution in the number of our ships in
 ‘ port, has not sunk the estimate lower than to
 ‘ 24,000*l*.

‘ Every article, Sir, cannot be insisted upon
 ‘ without an improper and unnecessary expence
 ‘ of time, or without fatiguing unseasonably the
 ‘ attention of the house; but one particular I
 ‘ cannot pass over without some reflection, as I
 ‘ cannot look upon it without some degree of in-
 ‘ dignation. The expence of moorage, which
 ‘ was for the last year computed only at 21,000*l*.
 ‘ is here estimated at no less than 19,000*l*. though
 ‘ a few ships remain in the harbours: An im-
 ‘ mense disproportion, which cannot be imputed
 ‘ to ignorance, or even to negligence, but to a
 ‘ full confidence of blind compliance.

‘ But for what end do we sit here? Is it to
 ‘ give a sanction to the wildest calculations, and
 ‘ grant supplies without asking how they are
 ‘ made use of? When schemes like these are laid
 ‘ before us, when sums are set down at hazard,
 ‘ and demands made by caprice, it is at least
 ‘ proper to examine the demands, and if they
 ‘ cannot admit a better vindication than I believe
 ‘ this will be able to find, it is our duty to reject
 ‘ them; whether by rejecting them we do all our
 ‘ duty, let the example of former Parliaments
 ‘ determine.’

Sir Charles Wager spoke next in the following manner.

Sir Charles
 Wager's
 speech.

‘ Sir, I must confess myself unable to discover
 ‘ in the estimate now lying before us, any reason
 ‘ for so loud a complaint, or so severe reflections,
 ‘ as it is always to be remembered that these esti-
 ‘ mates are not infallible, or scrupulously exact,
 ‘ they are not accounts of past, but computations
 ‘ of future expences, in which some allowance is
 ‘ made

‘ made for contingencies, and occasions of ex-
 ‘ pence not regularly provided for, or always
 ‘ foreseen, and it is generally thought sufficient,
 ‘ if there appear no such enormity in the calcula-
 ‘ tion as evidently discovers an intention to de-
 ‘ fraud, which I am certain cannot be found here.

‘ The disproportion between the last and the
 ‘ present estimate, will not be found so great as
 ‘ it may appear, at first, to gentlemen not skilled
 ‘ in naval affairs; when the difference between
 ‘ the bulk of the ships now remaining on the or-
 ‘ dinary, with those for which the estimate was
 ‘ made in the last session, is considered. Few of
 ‘ the largest ships are in commission, or employ’d
 ‘ in the present war, which requires ships rather
 ‘ for pursuit than battle; and therefore, though
 ‘ the number of ships be less, we are not to ex-
 ‘ pect the charge to be less in proportion; unless
 ‘ it can be supposed that a large ship is not more
 ‘ expensive than a small one.

‘ It is objected, with much appearance of
 ‘ strength, that the article of moorage is beyond
 ‘ all proportion to the number of ships now in
 ‘ the harbour; but it is forgotten that cables and
 ‘ chains, lying in the water, suffer almost equal
 ‘ decay, and demand to be equally repaired as
 ‘ well without ships fastened thereto as with them,
 ‘ and the same repairs exact the same expence.

‘ In defence of the general computation it may
 ‘ be further answered, that new vessels are al-
 ‘ ways to be built, and old ones continually to be
 ‘ refitted, that neither can be done without work-
 ‘ men, and workmen will not labour without
 ‘ pay.’

Samuel Sandys, Esq; replied in the following manner.

‘ Sir, I have listened with my utmost attention Mr. Sandys's speech
 ‘ to the honourable gentleman that has just spo-
 ‘ ken,

‘ ken, whose experience in naval armaments and
‘ expences entitles him to be heard on such ques-
‘ tions as this, with every degree of respect that
‘ may not border upon a blind submission, and
‘ am not without great uneasiness to find, that he
‘ has urged nothing in defence of this estimate,
‘ that may not be said for any demand that pro-
‘ fusion or wantonness shall make upon the na-
‘ tion. Every calculation, how fraudulent so-
‘ ever, when made for future expences, will admit
‘ of some general defence, there will always be
‘ some distant possibility that all the sums de-
‘ manded may be necessary, and that possibility
‘ may be represented as more or less probable,
‘ according to the inclinations of the objectors
‘ and defenders. It may always be said, where
‘ exactness is not attainable, that a computation
‘ is made according to the real opinion of the
‘ calculators, or that no more is asked than they
‘ believe they shall be able to find means of
‘ spending. But the publick will not be satisfied
‘ with such accounts as these, they will not wil-
‘ lingly, and ought not patiently, to be burden-
‘ ed with taxes, to guard against remote contin-
‘ gencies, and defray conjectural expences.

‘ A nearer view of these affairs is necessary,
‘ that these expences may be more exactly settled,
‘ nor will a nearer view be denied us, if those
‘ who manage the navy apprehend no danger
‘ from it. If therefore they would give a proof,
‘ that their innocence leaves nothing to be feared
‘ from a regular inquiry, let them descend from
‘ general terms, and enable us country gentlemen,
‘ by a clear explication, to judge for ourselves
‘ and our constituents, and agree from conviction
‘ and knowledge to that, which, as the right ho-
‘ nourable gentleman who spoke first observed,
‘ we have hitherto blindly complied with.’

Lord

Lord *Polwarth* then spoke in this manner.

‘ Sir, I am so far from being satisfied with this
‘ estimate, that the longer I consider it the more
‘ reasons I find to disapprove it; every new in-
‘ quiry produces new grounds for suspicion, and
‘ every article that falls under my examination
‘ confirms me, that nothing can be more falla-
‘ ciously drawn up than this calculation. I have
‘ examined the papers on the table, and find
‘ them all concurring to convince us, that it is
‘ time to be no longer tamely complying, or ta-
‘ citly doubtful. One compliance produces con-
‘ fident expectations of another, and fraud at
‘ length becomes daring and open. Our igno-
‘ rance of naval business has, indeed, long ex-
‘ posed us to the mercy of those, to whose care
‘ the management of our fleets is intrusted; but
‘ they seem now to presume too far upon our
‘ weakness, and to grow sufficiently exorbitant in
‘ their demands to awaken us to vigilance, and
‘ provoke us to inquiries. For more than fifty
‘ years past, Sir, this article of publick charge
‘ has been continually increasing, and additions
‘ have every year been silently made to it; and
‘ with whatever reason, or from whatever influ-
‘ ence, for the greatest part silently allowed. I
‘ am unwilling to reflect either on the living or
‘ the dead; perhaps it might not appear in a time
‘ of peace so necessary to inquire, particularly,
‘ into the application of every sum granted by
‘ Parliament. But that time of negligence and
‘ plenty is now past, we are engaged in a war
‘ which may demand all our force and all our
‘ treasure, all our vigilance and all our frugality:
‘ For, by frugality alone, Sir, can war be sup-
‘ ported, by frugality alone can we conquer with-

Lord *Pol-
warth's
speech*

‘ out suffering by our victories, and without purchasing glory and influence at too dear a rate.

‘ But, instead of œconomy and parsimony, new pretences for expence are daily invented, new salaries paid, and new offices erected. That it was not uncommon for other Parliaments to vote down superfluous offices, is well known, and perhaps the new office of clerk of the journals, with a salary of 200*l.* may be reckoned in that number.

‘ If any gentleman shall think these articles of too little importance for an inquiry, or the sums too small to become the care of the publick, I shall freely confess that I differ from his opinion; the same duty to my country that shall direct my conduct in greater affairs, shall make me honest in less. If we suffer any thing to pass unexamined under the appellation of a trifle, we may, in time perhaps, be taught to treat as trifles, questions of higher importance, and reckon among other trifles, the ruin of our country.’

To this *Thomas Clutterbuck*, Esq; replied in the following manner.

Mr. Clutterbuck's speech.

‘ Sir, Those that are unacquainted with the business of the admiralty, may, from a superficial view, easily be inclined to judge those officers superfluous, which nearer experience has shown not only to be advantageous but necessary, of which the clerk of the journals will, I believe, appear to be one. That I did myself project and advise this office, I am far from denying or desiring to conceal, as I am confident it has prevented a great number of fraudulent practices in captains of ships, which were punished, indeed, whenever they were detected, but which were generally continued with impunity, because, till
‘ the

‘ the erection of this office, it was no man’s business to detect them. No captain can now receive his pay, till it has appeared by his journal, that he has followed his instructions, and deserved the wages of the publick. Such is the benefit arising from this office, an office, of which, if it shall appear useless, I shall be very forward to vote the abolition.’

Sir George Oxenden then rose up and said :

‘ Sir, A debate unconfined to any particular article, and carried on in general terms, may be continued a long time without conviction on one side, or confutation on the other. We have been either accidentally, or by design, diverted from the article of moorage, to which I beg the liberty of recalling the attention of the house; and instead of farther controversy, shall offer an open and ingenuous proposal, That if any gentleman will say that 19,000*l.* can be expended in moorage, I will agree to the other articles without further examination, after having received such unexpected satisfaction with regard to this.’

Sir George Oxenden's speech.

Thomas Corbet, Esq; then replied in effect as follows :

‘ Sir, This demand, which carries such a fair appearance of confidence, pacifick intentions, and inclination to admit any reasonable satisfaction, is, perhaps, intended only to lengthen the debate, and make the estimate which is before us more liable to censure. That 19,000*l.* is expended in moorage, no gentleman will be found to assert, because moorage has, in all estimates of this kind. been made use of as a general head, or term of extended signification,

Mr. Corbet's speech.

‘ tion, including not only the particular expence
‘ of fixing the ships in the harbour, but the
‘ charge of surveying the state of this article,
‘ in all parts of the kingdom.

‘ With respect, Sir, to the honourable gentle-
‘ man’s observation, that some officers of the
‘ admiralty have been voted useless, I do not
‘ perceive the consequence which he seems to
‘ draw from it, That no new one is necessary.
‘ Surely there may be superfluities in one part,
‘ and deficiencies in another. Even those parti-
‘ cular votes have sometimes been the effects ra-
‘ ther of passion than knowledge, of private
‘ prejudice, or personal provocations, than of
‘ calm and settled determinations; and there-
‘ fore, Sir, the same offices have been sometimes
‘ reviv’d, though, out of respect to Parliament,
‘ under different names. Thus the office of
‘ solicitor to the admiralty was voted useless,
‘ because the man who served it under that
‘ name, made it a practice to bring in bills for
‘ the service he had done, sometimes to the
‘ amount of 15,000*l.* in a year; demands so
‘ exorbitant, that they were justly censured by
‘ the house; and the officer was not only dis-
‘ missed, but the office itself doom’d to aboli-
‘ tion. But it was not long before the service
‘ of a lawyer appeared absolutely necessary to
‘ the board of admiralty, for the preservation of
‘ their privileges, and the prosecution of delin-
‘ quents; and therefore a council to the admi-
‘ ralty is now employed, who for a salary of
‘ 400*l.* a year, transacts their affairs without
‘ making any bills, or receiving any more than
‘ his settled allowance.

‘ That corruption may find its way into any
‘ administration cannot be denied; but, if the
‘ affairs of the navy suffer by any frauds or arti-
‘ fices, it must be allowed not to happen for
‘ want

‘ want of caution ; for all the business and ex-
 ‘ pence of the navy, has been, of late, so ex-
 ‘ actly and ingeniously regulated, that no officer
 ‘ can fail in his duty without being detected by
 ‘ the accounts of another. Yet this œconomy,
 ‘ exact as it is, cannot produce any certainty in
 ‘ general calculations, which I cannot, without
 ‘ wonder, hear so nicely examined. It requires
 ‘ no long reflexion to perceive, that no body
 ‘ can gain any thing by a low or high computa-
 ‘ tion. If the moorage, computed at 19,000*l*.
 ‘ should amount to 24,000*l*. must it not be de-
 ‘ fray’d? And if it should fall below 15,000*l*.
 ‘ will not the remaining part be so much laid up
 ‘ for the expences of the next year? If we could
 ‘ regulate our expence by our calculation, I
 ‘ should be zealous for reducing it ; but so it is,
 ‘ that our calculations, how deliberately soever
 ‘ made, must yield to our necessities : In pro-
 ‘ viding, therefore, according to a higher esti-
 ‘ mate, nothing will be lost, nor by a lower,
 ‘ will any thing be saved.’

Lord *Polwarth* answered as follows, *viz.*

‘ Sir, I have still, notwithstanding these apo-
 ‘ logies, objections to, almost, every article of
 ‘ the estimate. I am still more convinced, as
 ‘ the debate proceeds, that it is necessary to re-
 ‘ fer it to a secret committee ; in which we may,
 ‘ at leisure, hear an explication of many things,
 ‘ either naturally obscure, or industriously con-
 ‘ cealed. The whole calculation, as it now lies
 ‘ before us, is to me a heap of confusion, an un-
 ‘ intelligible collection of articles comprising
 ‘ other articles unmentioned, as the honourable
 ‘ gentleman himself confesses : Such intricacies
 ‘ as these will for ever elude a superficial inqui-
 ‘ ry ; should it be proved by all the evidence of

Lord *Pol-
warth's an-
swer.*

‘ testimony and demonstration of arithmetick,
‘ that an article is overcharged, it may be very
‘ readily replied, that the articles included in it
‘ swallow up the remainder; so when the multi-
‘ plicity of offices in the navy shall produce any
‘ censure or objections, nothing can be more
‘ easy than in general terms to assert, with an
‘ air of confidence, their use and necessity. But
‘ the publick has now learned to distrust such
‘ easy vindications, and to expect other proofs
‘ of the reasonableness of the immense expences
‘ supported by the nation.

‘ If the money demanded is frugally and ho-
‘ nestly managed, if the officers employed in
‘ the naval operations are really necessary, that
‘ necessity will appear to the committee; and by
‘ being shewn to the nation will produce confi-
‘ dence in the government, chearfulness under
‘ the present load of taxes, and alacrity in the
‘ prosecution of the present war.

‘ That the present number of officers is too
‘ high, I do not pretend to assert, having already
‘ confessed my ignorance of these affairs; per-
‘ haps more officers may be proper, nor will it
‘ less become the committee to erect a necessary,
‘ than to destroy a superfluous office. It cannot,
‘ however, be improper to observe, that since
‘ the act, which prohibits the erection of new
‘ offices, was passed, the commissioners of the
‘ admiralty have been multiplied from five to
‘ seven; and the office, even of the honourable
‘ gentleman that spoke last, has been erected
‘ since the regulation of the navy, which he so
‘ much extols.

‘ Even among those officers, whose long esta-
‘ blishment may induce us to believe them not
‘ wholly without their uses, some corruptions
‘ may, perhaps, be discovered, which it may be
‘ proper to reform, before they become, by long
‘ custom,

‘ custom, part of their privileges. The practice
 ‘ of meeting at a coffee-house, instead of their
 ‘ office, lately introduced among the commif-
 ‘ sioners for victualling, doubtless for the sake
 ‘ of being victualled themselves, may in time,
 ‘ if not animadverted upon, plead prescription,
 ‘ and become a new article of a national charge.

‘ I therefore move, that the estimate for the
 ‘ navy may be referred to a secret committee.’

Sir William Yonge then spoke as follows.

‘ Sir, Nothing appears to me more inconsistent *Sir William
Yonge's
speech*
 ‘ with the duty of a member of this house, than
 ‘ to waste the time, allotted to the dispatch of
 ‘ publick affairs, in useless questions and insignifi-
 ‘ cant debates; that little can be objected to a mo-
 ‘ tion, is not always a reason for admitting it; for
 ‘ if no more can be alledged for it, the necessity of
 ‘ sparing time, is of itself, a very strong argument
 ‘ for rejecting it. The present motion, I think of
 ‘ this kind; the publick cannot indeed suffer by an
 ‘ examination of the estimate in a secret committee,
 ‘ otherwise than by the loss of that time, which
 ‘ might have been much more usefully spent in
 ‘ other inquiries; but then, what benefit can be
 ‘ expected from it, equal even to that considera-
 ‘ tion? If I may be allowed to judge what will be
 ‘ the result of the inquiries made by the commit-
 ‘ tee, from the report that was produced by the
 ‘ last examination of that kind, we shall only do,
 ‘ after altercations and delays, what is now desired,
 ‘ and what it will be more candid and advantage-
 ‘ ous to do without them.

‘ The last committee, before whom the like
 ‘ computation was brought, made no discoveries
 ‘ of false accounts, nor produced new schemes,
 ‘ by which the navy might be kept up at less ex-
 ‘ pence; questions were asked and resolved, ob-

jections were raised and immediately removed,
and such doubtless will be the effect of another
inquiry.

Nor do I see what can be done in a committee, which cannot be done now the articles are all before us, and if any gentleman has objections to them, let him set them in the strongest light; how easily they will be answered we may conjecture, by the success of that which was made to the article of moorage. The honourable gentleman who spoke the second on this question, has unanswerably refuted it, by shewing that a greater number of small ships may be moored and kept in the harbour, at less expence than a less number of larger, which require, even when out of commission, many hands to do the necessary business on board them.

They complain, indeed, that they do not understand the estimate, and that many articles require explanation; but experience teaches us, that no explanation will be satisfactory to the prejudiced. There are men who judge of transactions by the persons that manage them, and who will never approve an estimate, till they are reconciled to the calculator. Such men are always warm in their desires of seeing the offices filled with proper persons, but are always determined to think none proper but such as themselves shall recommend.

I cannot therefore but confess, that, to me, this motion appears unseasonable and unnecessary; and that as a committee for this purpose alone, will spend time to no advantage at an important juncture, this estimate may, in my opinion, be more properly referr'd to the committee of supplies, where every gentleman may do what is proposed by the present motion, where inquiries may be made without interruption, and every
one

‘ one may object, answer, or reply, without restraint.’

William Pulteney, Esq; then rose up and made the following answer.

‘ Sir, In every debate, whether in this or any other place, the first regard is due to truth, but very often, when that has been overborne by interest or prejudice, some respect has been paid to decency; and men have been restrained by shame, when nobler motives have lost their power. Decency should, I think, prevail upon gentlemen to forbear, or drop all opposition to the present motion, by which nothing is intended but to gain the informations necessary for judging of a question, which the interest of our country requires to be well understood; and which I myself, with many others, are desirous to be fully acquainted with. The objections of those two noble persons, who have examined it most, and who have made naval affairs either their study or diversion, deserve at least to be considered, and even the answer that was made to one of them, is a sufficient foundation for inquiry. If large ships, even out of commission, require so large an expence, why do we build or maintain so many to impoverish the nation, not to defend it, never to be sent out against our enemies, and yet waste our treasure by being in the harbour? Why have we not, instead of one of these vessels of useless bulk, four or five twenty-gun ships, that might chase the pirates from our coasts, and follow them into their retreats? Why do we employ in the present war, a war against an enemy equally insolent and weak, such vessels as they dare not attack, and which can never attack them? To such questions as these, the nation demands a clear and satisfactory answer; and if
‘ the

Mr. Pulteney's speech.

‘ the demands of the nation are thought worthy
 ‘ of regard, this motion of my noble friend’s,
 ‘ which I now second, will not be rejected.’

William Hay, Esq; rose up in his own vindication, and spoke to this effect.

Mr. Hay’s
 speech.

‘ Sir, Nothing is more reasonable than for every
 ‘ man to vindicate his character from unjust re-
 ‘ flections, and therefore I rise up in defence of
 ‘ mine. I have indeed the honour of sitting at
 ‘ the victualling-board; but, to make use of the
 ‘ right honourable gentleman’s polite expression,
 ‘ was never victualled, nor ever tasted any provi-
 ‘ sions prepared at the publick cost, except to
 ‘ prevent abuses and judge whether it was such
 ‘ as was fit for the navy: I am sure I cannot be
 ‘ charged with neglecting to pay the necessary at-
 ‘ tendance at the office, yet do not deny that I
 ‘ have sometimes signed papers at other places,
 ‘ nor do I think such a practice requires an apolo-
 ‘ gy. If the state of the navy be thought a sub-
 ‘ ject proper for examination, I shall chearfully
 ‘ submit my conduct to the most rigorous scrutiny,
 ‘ without desiring any favour or any protection.’

On a division, whether this matter should be considered in the committee of supply, the question was carried in the affirmative, 142 yeas, to 85 noes.

King’s mes-
 sage sent to
 the Com-
 mons singly.

His Majesty having, on *February* 12, sent a message to the house of Commons, without sending one at the same time to the house of Lords, this neglect was by some Lords look’d on as an affront put upon their house, which made them resolve to have the matter considered in a full house; and therefore the house was upon a motion ordered to be summoned for *Thursday* the 28th of *February*,

February, when the Earl of *Halifax* stood up, and spoke to this effect:

‘ My Lords,

‘ As no Lord can have a truer regard for the
 ‘ honour and privileges of this house, than myself, Lord Halifax's speech and motion thereupon.
 ‘ so none can feel a warmer indignation, whenever
 ‘ any attack is offered them. To preserve this
 ‘ supreme council of the nation in the full enjoy-
 ‘ of all those rights derived to us from the consti-
 ‘ tution of Parliament, is a duty we owe ourselves,
 ‘ a duty we owe our posterity, a duty we owe our
 ‘ country. The privileges of this house, and the
 ‘ liberties of this nation, are embarked on the same
 ‘ bottom, and we cannot forego the one without
 ‘ endangering the other. Our acquiescence under
 ‘ any affront, (be it the effect of design, or be it
 ‘ the effect of neglect) may in future times be
 ‘ looked upon as a tacit resignation of our rights,
 ‘ and be made a precedent to the dishonour of this
 ‘ house, and the destruction of this kingdom.

‘ I cannot, therefore, too earnestly recommend
 ‘ to your Lordships consideration, his Majesty's
 ‘ message to the house of Commons, which we
 ‘ find in the printed votes of the 12th of this
 ‘ month. The words of the message are these:

GEORGE R.

His Majesty, in further prosecution of the just and necessary war, in which he is engaged, having under his consideration certain measures, which will occasion some extraordinary expences not comprehended in the estimates laid before this house, hopes, from the known zeal of his faithful Commons, that he shall be enabled to carry on the same, in the most effectual manner.

‘ And does his Majesty hope less from his faith-
 ‘ ful Lords, that, contrary to all form and custom,
 ‘ a demand of supply should be made to the Com-
 ‘ mons singly, and your Lordships not have the
 ‘ least cognizance of it? Is it to be supposed, we
 ‘ are

‘ are not equally zealous for the success of the
‘ present war? Equally desirous of supporting his
‘ Majesty in the just prosecution of it? Or is our
‘ concurrence upon all occasions thought a thing
‘ so sure, so certain, that the usual forms of con-
‘ sulting us are to be thus thrown aside? Are we
‘ then fallen so low, have we so long flatter’d a
‘ minister, that he can promise himself our easy
‘ compliance, though he refuse us the common
‘ civility due to us, and answering for our conduct,
‘ advise his Majesty to apply to the Commons, as
‘ the only part of Parliament that has any thing
‘ left in its disposal? The time has been, my
‘ Lords, that the crown with honour and success
‘ has consulted this house; and sure I am, that I
‘ have many Lords now in my eye, capable of
‘ giving such advice to his Majesty, as would tend
‘ to the glory of his reign, and the welfare of his
‘ people.

‘ I am sorry, my Lords, I cannot charitably
‘ suppose, that this contempt of us proceeded from
‘ a mistake and oversight of the ministry’s. As
‘ the house of Commons has been the chief place
‘ of business this session, it is possible your Lord-
‘ ships may be as much out of some people’s
‘ thoughts, as the convocation is, but hardly, I
‘ believe, out of a minister’s. Some little circum-
‘ stances or other are perpetually reminding him of
‘ us. Besides, my Lords, this is not the first in-
‘ dignity of the kind that has been offered us: In
‘ the year 1726, the same thing happened; and
‘ in a message from his Majesty to the house of
‘ Commons (probably penned by the same hand
‘ as this) the appellation of Parliament was given
‘ them, as if the Parliament of *England* were com-
‘ posed of their body only. I must, therefore,
‘ consider the present case as a repeated invasion
‘ of the privileges of this house, highly reflecting
‘ upon the dignity of every Peer who has a seat in
‘ it.

‘ it. Why this has been thought a proper time
‘ for such an attack, I know not, unless it be
‘ supposed, that the essence of Parliament is lost.
‘ Was this the case, my Lords, (which God for-
‘ bid!) we should do right, however, to keep up
‘ the forms and customs of it, and maintain at
‘ least the appearance of what our ancestors enjoy-
‘ ed. If there are any such reflecting suppositions
‘ as these, if there are any such as flatter them-
‘ selves, that a successful corruption has banished
‘ the freedom of Parliament, it is our duty, my
‘ Lords, to blast such hopes, and shew we are not
‘ yet such humble dependants upon power, as
‘ tamely to offer a sacrifice of our rights, when-
‘ ever a minister pleases to call for them. What a
‘ melancholy prospect should we lay before the
‘ eyes of our countrymen, whose expiring liberties
‘ call loudly for our aid, if we the guardians of
‘ their rights, were no longer to be protectors of
‘ our own!

‘ Who, my Lords, could have been the au-
‘ thor of this message, I own I am at a loss to
‘ say: It could not have been his Majesty’s: His
‘ Royal Favours to so many of your Lordships,
‘ is a sure proof of his tender regard to the honour
‘ and dignity of this house: It could not have
‘ been dictated by any of the Lords of his Maje-
‘ sty’s privy council: They never would have
‘ advised so great an infringement of their own
‘ privileges; nay, they could not even have had
‘ cognizance of it; if they had, they would
‘ have prevented it. Whosoever’s work it was,
‘ thus far I will venture to say, my Lords, that
‘ it was formed upon that fatal, yet favourite plan
‘ of lessening the credit of Parliament. For this
‘ dreadful purpose, is it not enough, that every
‘ office and honour in the church and state pass
‘ through the hands of one man? Is it not
‘ enough, that he has it in his power to put vir-
‘ tue

‘ tue to the test, by privately applying that
‘ temptation, which he thinks is most likely to
‘ succeed? Must also a general assault be given to
‘ the whole body of us; and shall the dignity
‘ and honour of this house be treated as cavalierly
‘ as the miserable character of any single depen-
‘ dant?

‘ To avoid the odium and reproach such an in-
‘ vasion of our privileges must naturally incur, it
‘ has been artfully insinuated, my Lords, that
‘ this is matter of dispute between the Commons
‘ and us, so that under the pretence of asserting
‘ the rights of one house of Parliament, the
‘ rights of the other may the more easily be vio-
‘ lated. My Lords, this is no matter of dispute
‘ between the Commons and your Lordships:
‘ We ask nothing new, nothing unprecedented:
‘ We don’t attack any of their privileges; we
‘ only desire to remain in the possession of our
‘ own: Our utmost ambition in the present case
‘ is, to be look’d upon as a house of Parliament,
‘ and consulted by his Majesty as such. When
‘ our rights are thus plain and indubitable, our
‘ case becomes national, and the Commons them-
‘ selves are interested in the support of it: When-
‘ ever the dignity and authority of this house is
‘ brought low, their rights and privileges won’t
‘ be of long duration; and whenever any impious
‘ hand dare impose shackles upon us, the same
‘ fate will be prepared for every other part of the
‘ legislature.

‘ From such a calamity, the uninfluenced spirit
‘ of liberty that reigns in this house, the indepen-
‘ dent sentiments of your Lordships, (which nei-
‘ ther interest nor power can wean from your
‘ country’s cause) will, no doubt, sufficiently
‘ protect the present age; but we may lay foun-
‘ dations for the future dishonour of this house,
‘ if we let pass unregarded, such dangerous pre-
‘ cedents,

‘ cedents, as I apprehend this of his Majesty’s
 ‘ demand of supply to the house of Commons
 ‘ singly. I must, therefore, humbly move your
 ‘ Lordships, that you would come to this resolu-
 ‘ tion, “ That it is contrary to the customs of
 “ Parliament, and derogatory to the privileges of
 “ this house, that a message signed by his Maje-
 “ sty, asking a farther supply for carrying on a
 “ war, should be sent to the house of Com-
 “ mons singly, without taking any notice of this
 “ house.”

Lord *Delawar* spoke next in substance thus :

‘ My Lords,

‘ I shall always be as jealous of the honour,
 ‘ and of the rights and privileges of this house,
 ‘ as any Lord in it ; and shall be as ready to re-
 ‘ sent any indignity that may be put upon it.
 ‘ But, my Lords, we can put no greater indig-
 ‘ nity upon ourselves than that of being jealous
 ‘ without cause, or resenting without reason. In
 ‘ common life, a man that is unreasonably suspici-
 ‘ ous, and apt to take every thing as an affront,
 ‘ is always uneasy in himself, and generally de-
 ‘ spised by others. It will be the same with your
 ‘ Lordships: If you should suppose you are af-
 ‘ fronted, when no affront is designed, or insist
 ‘ upon rights that do not properly belong to you ;
 ‘ it will be the most effectual method you can
 ‘ take, for lessening or annihilating that respect
 ‘ which is due to you, as the highest and most
 ‘ august assembly in the nation. It is not by jea-
 ‘ lousies and suspicions, or by menacing resolu-
 ‘ tions, that we are to preserve that character,
 ‘ which this house has for so many ages deservedly
 ‘ borne, but by a prudent and steady conduct,
 ‘ and by shewing, that in all our proceedings we
 ‘ have sincerely at heart, the honour of the crown,
 ‘ the

Lord *Dela-
war*’s speech.

‘ the privileges of the subject, and the happiness
‘ of the nation.

‘ I am not only surprized, but sorry, that any
‘ Lord in this house should imagine, that his Ma-
‘ jesty, or any one that advised him, intended to
‘ put an affront upon this house, by sending to the
‘ Commons the message which the noble Lord has
‘ been pleased to mention, without sending at the
‘ same time the like message to this house. I am
‘ convinced, there was no affront designed, and I
‘ cannot see the least shadow of reason, why any
‘ Lord should imagine there was. So far other-
‘ wise, my Lords, I must think it would have
‘ been extremely improper to have sent any such
‘ message to this house, because it relates to no-
‘ thing but the supplies for the service of the en-
‘ suing year. It is the business of the other house
‘ to grant the necessary supplies, it is from the
‘ other house that such supplies are asked by the
‘ crown, and therefore, it is to the other house,
‘ and, I think, to it alone, that application ought
‘ to be made for any additional supply.

‘ In all the speeches that have been made from
‘ the throne for many years past, your Lordships
‘ may observe, that our Sovereign has always ad-
‘ dressed himself particularly to the gentlemen of
‘ the house of Commons, when he mentioned the
‘ supplies necessary for the current service. In that
‘ speech which his present Majesty made at the
‘ opening of this session, he addresses himself par-
‘ ticularly to the gentlemen of the house of Com-
‘ mons, and tells them, that he has ordered the
‘ estimates to be laid before them, and that he
‘ hopes they will grant such effectual supplies as
‘ may enable him to carry on the war with vigour.
‘ Was that particular address to the other house
‘ then found fault with? Was it ever found fault
‘ with? And yet, I must be of opinion, that we
‘ have as much reason, or rather more, to find
‘ fault

‘ fault with his Majesty’s addressing himself upon
‘ that occasion to the house of Commons singly,
‘ as we can have, to find fault with his having
‘ sent this message to that house singly.

‘ Our concurrence, ’tis true, my Lords, is ne-
‘ cessary for every article of supply that can be
‘ granted by the other house; but that concur-
‘ rence has always been expected without being
‘ asked by the crown. Why therefore should we
‘ look upon its not having been ask’d by the
‘ crown upon this occasion, as a neglect, or as
‘ any sign of disrespect? Nay, if your Lordships
‘ will but consider the words of the message, you
‘ must see, that his Majesty could not send it to
‘ this house. In that message his Majesty ac-
‘ quaints his Commons, that he has under his
‘ consideration, certain measures which would oc-
‘ casion some extraordinary expences, not com-
‘ prehended in the estimates laid before that house.
‘ Could his Majesty have expressed himself so to
‘ this house? Have we any estimates before us, or
‘ was it ever customary to lay any such estimates
‘ before us? The message therefore, if it had
‘ been sent to this house, must have been altered
‘ some way or another; and, I confess, I am at a
‘ loss to conceive, how it could have been altered,
‘ so as to make it proper for being sent to this
‘ house, without inserting some words that might
‘ have created a jealousy in the other; and this
‘ jealousy might, perhaps, have bred a contention
‘ between the two houses, that would have been
‘ of the most dangerous consequence in the pre-
‘ sent conjuncture.

‘ This, my Lords, is no groundless insinuation
‘ or pretence, in order to excuse the not sending
‘ that message to this house as well as the other.
‘ The sole right of granting supplies is a right
‘ which the other house has always most stre-
‘ nuously asserted, and we as pertinaciously refused

' to admit. It is a dispute that has occasioned
 ' great heats between the two houses as often as it
 ' has been revived, and has sometimes put a full
 ' stop to all publick business. How fatal this
 ' might be in our present circumstances, I must
 ' beg your Lordships to consider. We are now,
 ' my Lords, engaged in a dangerous war for
 ' vindicating the rights and privileges of the na-
 ' tion; and therefore, I must beg, that every
 ' Lord who has a concern for our success, would
 ' take care to avoid every thing that may give rise
 ' to a contest about particular rights and privileges
 ' amongst ourselves. This, I dread, may be the
 ' fate of the present question. If we should agree
 ' to it, I'm afraid, it will be consider'd as a claim
 ' set up by us, that no article of supply ought to
 ' be demanded of the house of Commons, with-
 ' out demanding it at the same time of us. This
 ' I must look upon as a new claim: It is a claim
 ' for which we have no precedent; and it is a
 ' claim that will, I fear, create a misunderstanding
 ' between us and the Commons; for which reason
 ' I must beg leave to think the noble Lord's mo-
 ' tion no way proper at present; but whether it
 ' may be proper to put a negative upon it, or to
 ' put the previous question, I must leave to your
 ' Lordships consideration.'

The next that stood up was Lord *Talbot*, the purport of whose speech was as follows, *viz.*

Lord *Talbot's*
speech.

' When I consider you, My Lords, as the su-
 ' preme council of the crown, and in a yet higher
 ' light, as the hereditary guardians of the liberties
 ' of a free, brave, and once flourishing people, I
 ' am struck with such reverential respect, such
 ' awful veneration, that I can scarcely give utter-
 ' ance to my thoughts in this august assembly.
 ' But when I reflect upon the insults offered to
 ' your

‘ your dignity, the contempt shewn to your au-
‘ thority, that reverence, that veneration hath a
‘ contrary effect upon my mind: Zeal for your
‘ rights, zeal for the interest of my country, in-
‘ flames my breast, and drives from thence every
‘ selfish consideration: I am impatient to vindicate
‘ your honour, and eager to violate that silence,
‘ prudence would always direct me to observe.

‘ When I read the printed votes, by which you
‘ were informed of the transaction that gave rise
‘ to the important business of this day; I read
‘ them with concern, with astonishment, with in-
‘ dignation. I endeavoured to discover, what
‘ could have occasioned this neglect from his Ma-
‘ jesty, this affront from his administration. I
‘ thoroughly examined the late conduct of the
‘ majority of your Lordships, and found nothing
‘ that could incur the displeasure of those in pow-
‘ er. Whatever measure they have condescended
‘ to communicate to your Lordships, hath always
‘ obtained your approbation; and, in regard to
‘ publick œconomy, to which the message taken
‘ notice of is chiefly relative, though it is far from
‘ my intention to flatter you, I must say, you
‘ have never shewn a disposition so niggardly, as
‘ to oppose a single scheme of ministerial generosi-
‘ ty.

‘ On the contrary, my Lords, you have given
‘ indisputable proofs of your contempt for sordid
‘ national frugality: You have behaved as if you
‘ were persuaded, the kingdom abounded as much
‘ in wealth, as the heads of those, who have, in
‘ some former times, had the management of af-
‘ fairs, were fertile in projects to squander and
‘ consume it: Nor do you entertain such a belief
‘ without substantial cause; for it would be absurd
‘ to imagine, 200,000 *l.* could be annually distri-
‘ buted among a part of your Lordships, by a
‘ nation which doth not enjoy the utmost affluence.

‘ But merit in every way deserves a suitable re-
 ‘ ward; and though a hundred lucrative employ-
 ‘ ments are possess’d by members of this august as-
 ‘ sembly, the duty expected from them is so ex-
 ‘ actly observed, that the greatest part is enjoyed
 ‘ with unenvied reputation.

‘ The Commons have gone great lengths in
 ‘ excluding your Lordships from any authority to
 ‘ alter money bills, though no aid can be granted,
 ‘ no taxes imposed, without your consent. They
 ‘ are very expert in explaining, and assiduous in
 ‘ contriving precedents to support this unreasona-
 ‘ ble infringement of your privileges; and, in this
 ‘ point, every relaxation of your own, is a con-
 ‘ firmation of their power. But, my Lords, what
 ‘ you have hitherto scorned verbally to admit, I
 ‘ hope you will disdain virtually to allow. The
 ‘ whole nation is concerned in your supporting
 ‘ your constitutional rights; for though some
 ‘ short-sighted politicians may imagine, by lessen-
 ‘ ing you, the Commons will be aggrandized, in
 ‘ fact it will be found, that every attempt to ren-
 ‘ der you insignificant, will be a step towards
 ‘ making the crown absolute.

‘ The other house hath been under the controul
 ‘ of one of its own members: May it never again
 ‘ be in the like abject state! But should that vile,
 ‘ detestable, seductive art, corruption, ever infi-
 ‘ nuate itself into that assembly, the effects may
 ‘ be as fatal, though the means more contemptible,
 ‘ than the hypocrisy, sagacity and intrepidity of
 ‘ *Cromwell*. If a majority in that house, instead
 ‘ of being really the representatives of the nation,
 ‘ should be elected by not more than fifty thousand,
 ‘ out of ten million of people, and those fifty thou-
 ‘ sand, the dregs of the populace: If a minister, by
 ‘ the assistance of a venal crew, the direct represen-
 ‘ tatives of their infamous constituents, should be
 ‘ secure of carrying every point, according to his
 ‘ own

‘ own inclination : If by them he shall be able to
 ‘ frustrate every inquiry into publick measures : If
 ‘ any motion to prevent a mercenary contagion
 ‘ from extending its baneful influence over those
 ‘ intrusted with the liberties of their country, shall
 ‘ be insolently rejected : If a law in the statute
 ‘ books for that salutary purpose, shall be notori-
 ‘ ously violated, and explained contrary both to
 ‘ the spirit and letter of such a law ; what will be
 ‘ the fate of this unhappy nation, if your Lord-
 ‘ ships are not then in a condition to protect your
 ‘ country ?

‘ I beg pardon for having trespassed so long
 ‘ upon your Lordships time. The motion is so
 ‘ moderate, a mere assertion of indubitable rights,
 ‘ that, I think, no method of evading it ought
 ‘ to be used. Indeed, if strength of argument,
 ‘ enlivened by all the force of eloquence, and
 ‘ truth delivered with dignity, because dictated
 ‘ by a heart whose predominant passion is the
 ‘ publick welfare, can have any weight here, the
 ‘ fate of the noble Lord’s motion may be safely
 ‘ rested upon what he hath so fully, so honestly
 ‘ urged in support of it.’

The next speech we shall give, was that made
 by the Lord Chancellor, who spoke in substance
 thus :

‘ My Lords,

‘ Before we can with any propriety enter seri-
 ‘ ously into the debate, ’tis necessary we should
 ‘ well understand the nature of the question before
 ‘ us. I shall not, therefore, at present trouble you
 ‘ with entering into the merits, I shall only take
 ‘ the liberty to state the question, according as it
 ‘ appears to me. His Majesty, in his speech from
 ‘ the throne, at the opening of the session, de-
 ‘ manded of the other house a supply for the ser-

Lord Chan-
 cellor’s
 speech.

‘ vice of the ensuing year, and told them he
‘ would order estimates of the particular services
‘ to be laid before them. Those estimates were
‘ accordingly laid before them; but then, as we
‘ are now engaged in a war, and as his Majesty,
‘ it seems, is resolved to undertake, if possible,
‘ some secret expeditions against the enemy, an
‘ account of which neither can nor ought to be
‘ made publick, a greater supply will be necessary
‘ than can appear by the estimates laid before the
‘ other house, and this his Majesty thought him-
‘ self obliged to acquaint them of; because, other-
‘ wise, he could not have expected any greater
‘ supply than appeared necessary by the estimates
‘ he had ordered to be laid before them, and con-
‘ sequently he could not have undertaken any se-
‘ cret expedition against the enemy, however pro-
‘ bable the success might have appeared, or how-
‘ ever expedient future accidents or circumstances
‘ might have rendered it for him to engage in such
‘ a one.

‘ The message, therefore, which is now under
‘ your Lordships consideration, I can look upon
‘ in no other light, than as a message to the other
‘ house, to acquaint them, that some expence
‘ would be necessary, of which no estimate could
‘ be made; and in this light I must look upon it
‘ as a sort of estimate, and must think, that your
‘ Lordships have as much reason to complain, that
‘ all the estimates for the particular services of the
‘ ensuing year were not communicated to you, as
‘ well as to the other house, as you have to com-
‘ plain, that this estimate was not communicated
‘ to you at the same time it was sent to the Com-
‘ mons.’

Upon

Upon this the Lord *Carteret* stood up, and spoke to this effect:

‘ My Lords,

‘ I am surprized to hear the noble Lord that Lord Carteret's speech.
‘ spoke last, state the case as he has done. It is
‘ not possible to look upon this message in any
‘ light that can make it bear the least resemblance
‘ to an estimate. It is a message for a new supply;
‘ a supply arising from new measures, which were
‘ not so much as hinted at in his Majesty's speech
‘ from the throne. Let us, my Lords, but con-
‘ sider the words of his Majesty's speech, and we
‘ must conclude, that the message now under our
‘ consideration, can have no relation to any supply
‘ thereby demanded. His Majesty, when he ad-
‘ dresses himself to the house of Commons, tells
‘ them, that he has ordered estimates for the ser-
‘ vice of the ensuing year, and likewise accounts
‘ of the extraordinary expences of the current
‘ year, as also an estimate of the charge of raising
‘ a body of marines, to be laid before them; and
‘ then he says, he cannot doubt but they will
‘ grant such effectual supplies, as may enable him
‘ to carry on the war with vigour. Can the word,
‘ supplies, here relate to any thing but the esti-
‘ mates and accounts, which his Majesty had or-
‘ dered to be laid before them? Can any one sup-
‘ pose, his Majesty meant, that it should relate to
‘ a charge, of which no estimate or account could
‘ be laid before them? Or could any Lord in this
‘ house suppose, from what his Majesty there said,
‘ that any measures were to be undertaken, which
‘ were not to be mentioned in any of the esti-
‘ mates? If any such measures were then thought
‘ on, they ought to have been mentioned in his
‘ Majesty's speech from the throne: If they have
‘ since fallen under consideration, his Majesty
‘ should

‘ should have been advised to have come again to
‘ the house, and acquainted us of it by a new
‘ speech, or at least he should have been advised
‘ to have communicated it to both houses by mes-
‘ sage. If his Majesty had by either of these me-
‘ thods told us, that he had under his considera-
‘ tion such measures as would require an additional
‘ expence, but could not be communicated, I am
‘ sure, I should not, I believe no Lord in this
‘ house would, have desired a discovery.

‘ It is the business of the other house, my
‘ Lords, to consider and determine, what supplies
‘ may be necessary for the publick service: It is
‘ their business to consider and determine, what
‘ ways and means may be most proper for raising
‘ those supplies; and we are to give our concur-
‘ rence, if we think they are in the right. But as
‘ to the measures or services which make those
‘ supplies necessary, it is our business to consider
‘ and determine, whether or no they are proper:
‘ It is this house that his Majesty ought chiefly to
‘ consult upon such occasions; therefore no sup-
‘ plies ought to be either asked or granted, till the
‘ measures or services have been communicated,
‘ or at least mentioned to this house, either by
‘ speech or message; and as from the very words
‘ of the message, it appears to be a message for a
‘ new supply, which is to be applied to services
‘ or measures, that were never before so much as
‘ hinted to this house, it ought for this reason to
‘ have been communicated to this house, to the
‘ end that we might have had some opportunity
‘ of approving or disapproving of the measures;
‘ and, at the same time, it ought to have been
‘ communicated to the other house, to the end
‘ that they might have provided the supplies ne-
‘ cessary for carrying on those measures.

‘ Having thus shewn, my Lords, that it is not
‘ possible to put such a meaning upon this message,

‘ as

‘ as has been put by the noble Lord that spoke
 ‘ last, I shall not trouble your Lordships at present
 ‘ with entering farther into the debate, because I
 ‘ have as yet heard very little said against the mo-
 ‘ tion; but if I should hear any material objection
 ‘ made to it, I shall beg leave to rise up again, in
 ‘ order to approve of the objections, if I think
 ‘ them such as ought to be approved of, or to
 ‘ give them such an answer, as I may think suffi-
 ‘ cient for preventing their having any influence
 ‘ in this debate.’

The next that spoke was the Earl of *Cholmondeley*, whose speech was in substance as follows, *viz.*

‘ My Lords,

‘ However proper or necessary the motion now
 ‘ under our consideration may be, I wish that no-
 ‘ ble Lords would, when they make any motion,
 ‘ keep close to the argument, and avoid launching
 ‘ out into personal invectives. The introductory
 ‘ speeches that have been made in favour of this
 ‘ motion, look’d, in my opinion, more like an
 ‘ introduction to an impeachment, than an intro-
 ‘ duction to a motion for vindicating the privileges
 ‘ of this house. If our liberties are expiring, my
 ‘ Lords, or if any attack has been lately made
 ‘ upon them, why does not some one of the noble
 ‘ Lords that think so, stand up in his place, and
 ‘ impeach those who are carrying on, or contri-
 ‘ ving any such attack? It is what every Lord has
 ‘ a right to do: It is what every Lord ought to
 ‘ do. Instead of bewailing upon every occasion
 ‘ the danger our liberties and constitution are ex-
 ‘ posed to, by secret machinations or fraudulent
 ‘ practices, they ought to explain those machina-
 ‘ tions and practices to the house, and they ought
 ‘ to conclude with an impeachment in form against
 ‘ the

Earl of *Chol-*
mondeley's
 speech

‘ the persons they suppose to be the authors of
‘ such wicked and dangerous designs.

‘ I hope, my Lords, I have as great a con-
‘ cern for the liberties of the nation, and for the
‘ rights and privileges of this house, as any
‘ Lord that has the honour of having a seat in
‘ this august assembly; If I thought, that any
‘ attack had been made upon either, no Lord
‘ should be more ready than I, to concur in mea-
‘ sures for bringing the guilty authors and abet-
‘ ters to condign punishment. But I do not
‘ think, that the least attack has been lately made
‘ upon either; and, in the present case, I do
‘ not think it can be supposed, there was any de-
‘ sign of attacking the rights or privileges of this
‘ house. His Majesty, in his speech from the
‘ throne, desired such supplies, as might be effec-
‘ tual for enabling him to carry on the war with
‘ vigour; and if any one of those supplies be of
‘ such a nature, as not to admit of an estimate,
‘ can we suppose, that his not acquainting us of
‘ this, was designed as a violation of any of the
‘ privileges of this house? It is well known to
‘ every Lord here, that no estimate is ever laid
‘ before us: We generally agree, or we may dis-
‘ agree, to the supplies granted by the other
‘ house, without seeing any estimate. Whereas,
‘ in the other house, a particular estimate for each
‘ particular service is always laid before them, and
‘ they never grant a larger sum for any particular
‘ service, than appears from the particular estimate
‘ to be necessary; nor do they grant any sum for
‘ any particular service, without having an esti-
‘ mate for that particular service previously laid
‘ before them. Therefore, when a service was
‘ to be incurred, for which no particular estimate
‘ could be made, it was necessary for his Majesty
‘ to tell them so; but, in my opinion, it would
‘ have been both improper, and contrary to the
‘ usage

‘ usage of Parliament, to have said any thing of
 ‘ it to this house in his Majesty’s speech, and
 ‘ much more so, to have acquainted us of it by
 ‘ a particular message. It would, very probably,
 ‘ have given the alarm to the other house, as if
 ‘ his Majesty designed, that we should interfere
 ‘ with them in granting the necessary supplies;
 ‘ and therefore, I think, his Majesty’s not com-
 ‘ municating this message to us, was so far from
 ‘ being any sign of disrespect towards us, that it
 ‘ was a new testimony of his wisdom, and of the
 ‘ great regard he has to the usage of Parliament,
 ‘ and to the peace and happiness of his people.

‘ But suppose, my Lords, I were of opinion,
 ‘ that this message ought to have been communi-
 ‘ cated to this house at the same time it was com-
 ‘ municated to the other; yet, as I am fully sa-
 ‘ tisfied, that no affront was intended to be put
 ‘ upon us, by not sending this or some such mes-
 ‘ sage to us, at the same time it was sent to the
 ‘ other house, I could not, in our present circum-
 ‘ stances, concur with the motion now before
 ‘ you; because I should be afraid, that our com-
 ‘ ing to such a resolution might interrupt that
 ‘ unanimity, which is so necessary for bringing
 ‘ the war we are now engaged in, to a happy and
 ‘ speedy issue; and when the noble Lord con-
 ‘ siders this, I hope he will not insist upon having
 ‘ his motion put to the question.’

Lord *Onslow* next stood up, and made a short
 speech to the effect as follows, *viz.*

‘ My Lords,

‘ I cannot pretend to be so nice a judge of the
 ‘ rights and privileges of this house, as some of Lord On-
slow’s speech.
 ‘ your Lordships may be; but I cannot think,
 ‘ that an application to the other house singly, in
 ‘ any matter that relates to the supply, is such a
 ‘ direct and open violation of the rights and pri-
 ‘ vileges

‘vileges of this house, as ought to prevail with
 ‘us to come to a resolution, that may raise heats
 ‘and animosities about particular rights and privi-
 ‘leges amongst ourselves, when the rights and
 ‘privileges of the whole nation are in so much
 ‘danger. I am persuaded, an account of this
 ‘motion will be look’d on as very good news, by
 ‘the late Duke of *Ormond* at the head of his
 ‘rebel army in *Spain*. From the very motion it-
 ‘self, I believe, both he and the court of *Spain*
 ‘will conceive hopes of success in their intended
 ‘invasion; and if they conceive such hopes from
 ‘the motion, what will they not expect, should
 ‘they hear of its being agreed to? I am for do-
 ‘ing nothing that may give them the least encou-
 ‘ragement to attempt an invasion upon this na-
 ‘tion, and therefore I shall be against agreeing to
 ‘the resolution proposed.’

Lord *Delawar* then stood up again, and spoke thus:

‘My Lords,

Lord *Delawar*’s
speech.

‘I was in some hopes, the noble Lord would
 ‘have been prevailed on to have stood up and
 ‘waved his motion; but as the question seems
 ‘to be insisted on, and as some Lords may be
 ‘under difficulties with regard to a negative’s be-
 ‘ing put upon such a motion, and yet may be
 ‘convinced, that the present is a very improper
 ‘time for our coming to such a resolution, there-
 ‘fore I shall beg leave to move, that the previous
 ‘question may be put.’

Upon this the Lord *Carteret* stood up again, and spoke in substance as follows, *viz.*

‘My Lords,

Lord *Carteret*’s
answer.

‘Upon such a motion as this, I am extremely
 ‘surprized to hear any of your Lordships move
 ‘for the previous question. The previous ques-
 ‘tion,

‘ tion, my Lords, may, in many cases, be right,
‘ but surely it cannot be so in this. When a mo-
‘ tion is made, which appears to be in itself right,
‘ but which is neither necessary nor proper to be
‘ put to the question at that time, the previous
‘ question may then properly be moved for, and
‘ it is prudent to make use of it for waving a
‘ question, which does not then necessarily require
‘ an affirmative, and which cannot, in its own
‘ nature, admit of a negative. But can the ques-
‘ tion now before you be said to be of such a na-
‘ ture? My Lords, if it cannot admit of a nega-
‘ tive, it necessarily and immediately requires an
‘ affirmative. It is a question that affects the ho-
‘ nour of this house, and consequently the ho-
‘ nour of every Lord in it. If the honour of
‘ this house has been attacked by sending such a
‘ message to the house of Commons singly, which
‘ the previous question supposes, will any of your
‘ Lordships say, that we ought not immediately
‘ to vindicate our own honour, at least by such a
‘ resolution as my noble friend has been pleased to
‘ propose? Can our agreeing to such a resolution
‘ be attended with bad consequences at this time,
‘ any more than at another? My Lords, it can be
‘ attended with no bad consequences either to the
‘ nation in general, or to any particular man. It
‘ is so prudently drawn up, that it can affect no
‘ person in the kingdom: But if such a thing
‘ could be supposed, shall we allow the safety of
‘ any subject whatever to stand in competition
‘ with the honour and dignity of this house?

‘ We may talk of impeachments, my Lords,
‘ and of the right that every Lord in this house
‘ has, to stand up in his place, and impeach
‘ whomsoever he supposes to be guilty; but if it
‘ should appear, which I hope it never shall,
‘ that the majority of your Lordships have a
‘ greater regard for the safety of any particular
‘ subject,

‘ subject, than for your own honour, or the ho-
 ‘ nour of this assembly, I am sure it would be an
 ‘ imprudent and very ridiculous step in any Lord,
 ‘ to rise up and impeach that person before this
 ‘ assembly, even though he could bring evident
 ‘ proofs of his being guilty of the most heinous
 ‘ crimes and misdemeanors. In all cases of im-
 ‘ peachment, there are several preparatory steps
 ‘ or motions necessary, before any Lord can di-
 ‘ rectly impeach; and when such preparatory
 ‘ motions are disagreed to by the house, it be-
 ‘ comes impracticable for any Lord to proceed to
 ‘ an impeachment. In the present case, if what
 ‘ is now complained of were of such a heinous
 ‘ nature, as to deserve an impeachment, the first
 ‘ preparatory step would be some such motion as
 ‘ this, and the next would be a motion for ad-
 ‘ dressing his Majesty to know who had advised
 ‘ him; both which motions must be agreed to,
 ‘ and an answer returned from his Majesty, be-
 ‘ fore any Lord could stand up in his place, and
 ‘ impeach the person who gave the advice. But
 ‘ at present there is no such design: If there were,
 ‘ the motion would have been drawn up in much
 ‘ stronger terms. We may see from the terms in
 ‘ which it is drawn up, that the noble Lord has
 ‘ no other design, than to vindicate the rights
 ‘ and privileges of this house; and for this pur-
 ‘ pose, his motion will have a good effect, what-
 ‘ ever may be its fate. Even though our agree-
 ‘ ing to it should at this time be prevented by the
 ‘ previous question, yet the very motion will, I
 ‘ hope, prevent any minister’s daring to shew such
 ‘ a contempt of this house for the future.

‘ This, I hope, my Lords, will be the conse-
 ‘ quence of the motion, even though you should
 ‘ put the previous question upon it; but, if that
 ‘ question should pass in the negative, I must beg
 ‘ your Lordships to consider what effect it may
 ‘ have

‘ have with regard to your own characters. By put-
‘ ting the previous question, you admit, that the
‘ motion is in itself right: What reason then can
‘ be assigned for your not agreeing to it? None,
‘ but the regard you have for those who have, at
‘ present, the honour to be his Majesty’s counsel-
‘ lers and advisers; and will not the censorious
‘ world from thence conclude, that you have a
‘ greater regard for them, than you have for
‘ your own honour or reputation? Therefore, if
‘ the previous question should be put, as it must
‘ be, if insisted on, I hope every Lord that
‘ thinks the honour of this house is not in the
‘ least affected, by the sending of this message to
‘ the other house without taking any notice of
‘ this, as well as every Lord who thinks other-
‘ wise, will give his affirmative upon the previous
‘ question, in order that the principal question
‘ may be put; for those who think the honour
‘ of this house not in the least affected, ought to
‘ be for having a negative put upon the principal
‘ question, in order to vindicate their own cha-
‘ racters; and those who think otherwise, ought
‘ to insist upon having the principal question im-
‘ mediately agreed to, in order to vindicate the
‘ honour of this assembly. In a case of honour,
‘ my Lords, there is no doubt to be admitted of;
‘ for no man can have a true regard to his ho-
‘ nour, that does not immediately endeavour to
‘ vindicate it, in every case where there is the
‘ least suspicion of its being attack’d.

‘ But, my Lords, can any one of your Lord-
‘ ships doubt of the affront that has been put
‘ upon this house, in not communicating to us a
‘ measure in which the nation is so much con-
‘ cerned? Are we to agree to the supplies voted
‘ by the other house, without knowing any one
‘ reason for our so doing? The other house will
‘ probably, I hope they will, grant a supply for
‘ the

‘ the measures now under his Majesty’s considera-
‘ tion ; but how are we to know that there are
‘ any such measures under his consideration ? Are
‘ we to take an information, with regard to his
‘ Majesty’s intentions, from the Commons ? God
‘ forbid, my Lords, that ever any of your Lord-
‘ ships should entertain so mean a thought. What
‘ can we think then of this neglect ? Must we not
‘ think, that we are forgotten by his Majesty, or,
‘ at least, by those who have the honour to ad-
‘ vise him ? And, if this house shall once come
‘ to be forgotten by the crown, it will be forgot-
‘ ten by every man in the kingdom. It will be
‘ deserted even by those who then have the ho-
‘ nour, I may say the misfortune, of being mem-
‘ bers. It will then be attended only by three or
‘ four court Lords, and perhaps half a dozen or
‘ a dozen of Prelates ; and, if this should ever
‘ come to be the case, we may easily judge what
‘ weight or authority it will have among the
‘ people.

‘ For this reason, my Lords, I think we are
‘ infinitely obliged to the noble young Lords that
‘ made and seconded this motion ; and, if they
‘ have expressed themselves a little warmly, they
‘ ought to be applauded. It is natural for a
‘ young gentleman of any spirit to grow warm,
‘ when he thinks his honour in the least degree
‘ attack’d. My Lords, it is with pleasure I per-
‘ ceive a spirit of virtue and liberty beginning to
‘ prevail among the young Lords of this house.
‘ Their example will, I hope, be followed by all
‘ the youth of the nation ; and therefore, I must
‘ look upon them as the best securities we can
‘ have for the preservation and improvement of
‘ our constitution. Old men may, perhaps, be a
‘ little too passive : They may sit still under an
‘ incroachment, rather than expose themselves to
‘ the danger and fatigue of opposing it ; and
‘ thus,

‘ thus, by suffering incroachment after incroach-
‘ ment, the constitution may be undone: But,
‘ when the youth of a free nation are indu’d with
‘ a true spirit of virtue and honour, they will
‘ take fire upon the first incroachment: They will
‘ bear any fatigue, they will expose themselves to
‘ any danger, rather than allow the first to go
‘ unpunished, or at least unresented; and thus,
‘ by opposing the first, they will prevent a se-
‘ cond.

‘ It is needless, my Lords, to ask a precedent
‘ for our complaining of the message now under
‘ our consideration. It is hardly possible there
‘ should be any one directly in point. There ne-
‘ ver was such a message sent to both, or either
‘ house of Parliament, before the year 1717.
‘ But, I must observe, that this is not the first
‘ affront that has of late been attempted to be
‘ put upon this house. In the year 1726, his
‘ late Majesty was advised, in a message then
‘ sent, to call the other house the Parliament,
‘ as if this house had been no branch of the
‘ legislature. This was then properly resented:
‘ Those who advised it, were obliged to own it
‘ was a mistake; and it was, almost with tears
‘ in their eyes, they prevented a farther resent-
‘ ment. This is a precedent for our complaining
‘ when any neglect seems to be shewn us by the
‘ crown. The two cases, I shall grant, are far
‘ from being parallel; for the present case is as
‘ much stronger than the former, as facts are
‘ stronger than words. In the former case, the
‘ other house was, in words only, called the Par-
‘ liament; but in the present, they are, in fact,
‘ treated as such. They have been singly con-
‘ sulted in a point of the greatest importance and
‘ concern to the publick, as if we, of this house,
‘ had no share in the legislature or government of
‘ our country. Therefore, if we had then rea-
‘ son

‘ son to complain, as the majority of this house,
‘ at that time, thought we had, the reason we
‘ now have, is more cogent, and ought to be
‘ more prevailing.

‘ Our Sovereign’s addressing himself, in his
‘ speech, to the other house particularly, when
‘ he mentions the necessary supplies, can afford
‘ no pretence or excuse for the neglect now shewn
‘ to this. In every speech from the throne, the
‘ first part of it is addressed to both houses; and,
‘ in that, the measures or services which make
‘ the supplies necessary, are mentioned: Being
‘ thus informed of the services, we may judge of
‘ them, and may declare against them, if we think
‘ them improper or inconsistent with the publick
‘ good. But with regard to the services or mea-
‘ sures mentioned in this message, we have had
‘ no information of them, in a Parliamentary way,
‘ and therefore can no way judge of them, or
‘ give his Majesty any advice concerning them.
‘ If his Majesty had been so good as to let us
‘ know, that he has certain measures under his
‘ consideration, which will occasion some extraor-
‘ dinary expence, not comprehended in the esti-
‘ mates laid before the other house, I should cer-
‘ tainly have approved, without enquiring what
‘ the measures were, and should have been ready
‘ to have concurred in granting a supply sufficient
‘ for carrying them into execution, because, I be-
‘ lieve, they are right, and such as may contri-
‘ bute to our success in the present war. But, if
‘ I had thought otherwise, if I had thought that
‘ his Majesty had been advised to send the fleets
‘ and armies of this kingdom upon some roman-
‘ tick expedition, I would have been so far from
‘ approving, that I should probably have moved
‘ for an address, in order to give his Majesty pro-
‘ per advice upon the occasion; and, if the other
‘ house had granted a supply for the carrying on
‘ of

‘ of such measures, I should have refused giving
‘ it my concurrence in this house. Whereas, in
‘ the present case, I can neither approve nor dis-
‘ approve of the measures; and, if the grant of
‘ a supply for carrying on measures I know no-
‘ thing of in a Parliamentary way, should come
‘ up from the other house, I am sure, I shall think
‘ myself bound in duty to my King and coun-
‘ try, as well as for the sake of the honour of
‘ this house, to oppose as much as I can our
‘ giving our concurrence to such a grant.

‘ ’Tis true, my Lords, the estimates for the
‘ particular services are not laid before this house;
‘ but I hope no Lord imagines, that it is because
‘ we have not a right to examine into the supplies
‘ granted by the other house for answering those
‘ services. We may not only examine into them,
‘ but we may prevent their having any effect, by
‘ refusing our concurrence: We ought to do so,
‘ when we know nothing in a Parliamentary way,
‘ of the services for which they were granted;
‘ and though the estimates for the particular ser-
‘ vices are not usually laid before us, yet our So-
‘ vereign, in his speech from the throne, at the
‘ opening of the session, either does, or ought to
‘ communicate to us, in general terms, the ser-
‘ vices for which the supplies are to be granted,
‘ and in our presence acquaints the other house,
‘ that he has ordered the particular estimates and
‘ accounts to be laid before them. Nay, even as
‘ to those estimates and accounts, we may, if we
‘ please, call for them, and may examine particu-
‘ larly into every one of them: ’Twould be our
‘ duty to do so, if we should have the least suspi-
‘ cion, that any one of them were false, or over-
‘ charged.

‘ From what I have said, my Lords, I hope,
‘ it will appear, that those who advised his Ma-
‘ jesty to send a message to the other house, re-

‘ lating to publick measures to be undertaken,
‘ without taking any notice of this house, have
‘ been guilty of a violation of our rights and pri-
‘ vileges, as one, and I hope I may yet say, the
‘ superior house of Parliament; and this viola-
‘ tion, ’tis the more necessary for us to take notice
‘ of, because it is a violation of those Parliamen-
‘ tary forms of proceeding which, by our consti-
‘ tution, it has always been thought necessary to
‘ observe. Such a violation, my Lords, gives
‘ me a most melancholy consideration; because
‘ the substance of a constitution of government
‘ must be gone, before any one will dare to at-
‘ tack the forms. Even in the most absolute go-
‘ vernments that have been established upon the
‘ ruins of liberty, the forms of their ancient con-
‘ stitution have been preserved. The *Romans* re-
‘ tained their senate and their popular magistrates,
‘ even under their most arbitrary and tyrannical
‘ Emperors; and the consent of that senate seem-
‘ ed to be asked to every publick act; the elec-
‘ tion of their consuls, their tribunes, and several
‘ other magistrates, seemed to be left to the free
‘ choice of the people; but every one knows,
‘ that their senates always approved what the ty-
‘ rant’s chief minister dictated, and the people al-
‘ ways chose for their magistrates, the persons
‘ that were nominated by him; so that in effect
‘ the government was as absolute, and much
‘ more tyrannical, than it could have been, had
‘ they had no appearance of a senate, or of any
‘ popular magistrate. In *France* likewise, the forms
‘ of their ancient free constitution are still pre-
‘ served. The Parliament of *Paris* still registers
‘ the King’s edicts; but that Parliament has not
‘ now the liberty to refuse. So in this house, we
‘ may be allowed to approve of those measures,
‘ which our Sovereign and his ministers have be-
‘ fore resolved on; and this form, or rather farce
‘ of

‘ of having our approbation, may be continued
‘ for many years after our liberty or power of re-
‘ fusing it is taken away. I hope the ceremony
‘ of having our approbation is not, as yet, be-
‘ come a mere piece of form, or a mere farce;
‘ but from the treatment now complained of, I
‘ must suppose, that those who advised his Ma-
‘ jesty to treat us in such a manner, are of opi-
‘ nion, that even this farce is now become unne-
‘ cessary, for, it seems, they do not think our
‘ approbation to their measures so much as worth
‘ asking.

‘ My Lords, the constitution of our govern-
‘ ment, according to its ancient form, is the most
‘ perfect, I believe, that was ever establish’d;
‘ and therefore we certainly will, as long as we
‘ have any honour or publick spirit left, endea-
‘ vour to preserve it. A very great historian and
‘ politician has long ago said, that the best form
‘ of government is that, which consists of a cer-
‘ tain mixture of the three principal sorts of go-
‘ vernment; but such a form of government,
‘ says he, cannot possibly long endure. We, in
‘ this kingdom, have fallen upon that mixture,
‘ which he recommends; and thank God, we
‘ have hitherto defeated his prophecy. Our an-
‘ cestors have preserved that mixture for many
‘ ages, often at the risk of their lives and for-
‘ tunes: God forbid! my Lords, it should perish
‘ in our hands. But if we should once allow any
‘ minister to tread under foot, or in the least de-
‘ spise the rights and privileges of this house, or
‘ to advise our Sovereign to do so, the dignity of
‘ the Peerage will vanish, and if the dignity of
‘ the Peerage should vanish, the dignity of the
‘ Crown itself will be gone; for the dignity of
‘ our Sovereign consists in his being sovereign
‘ Lord of a free people, and a great number of
‘ considerable and independent Lords: Our con-
‘ stitution

'stitution will soon deviate into a democracy,
 'which will of course soon come under the abso-
 'lute rule of one, perhaps, one of the lowest
 'rank among them. This has been already once
 'our fate, and this may, probably, be again our
 'fate, if we should ever bring ourselves into pub-
 'lick contempt, by allowing a daring and usurp-
 'ing minister to trample upon our rights and pri-
 'vileges. To prevent this for the future, is the
 'only intention of the present motion; and
 'therefore, I hope, every Lord that thinks there
 'is the least cause to suppose, that our honour
 'has been attacked by the late neglect that has
 'been shewn us, will give his affirmative to the
 'principal question; for I cannot think the noble
 'Lord will insist upon the previous question, be-
 'cause I have shewn, that every Lord in this
 'house, let his opinion be what it will, ought to
 'be for having the principal question immediately
 'determined.'

The next that spoke was the Duke of *New-*
castle, the purport of whose speech was as fol-
 lows, *viz.*

Duke of
Newcastle's
 speech.

'My Lords,
 'With regard to the motion now under your
 'Lordships consideration, the previous question I
 'think is right, and for this very reason, because
 'the principal question is not right. There are
 'many questions which ought to have a negative
 'put upon them, whereof I think this is one,
 'and yet there may be danger in attempting to
 'put that negative; because, if the principal
 'question should be put, what by the ill-ground-
 'ed prejudices of some, and the unreasonable dif-
 'ficulties of others, it may be carried in the affir-
 'mative, very much to the detriment or danger
 'of the commonwealth.

'The

‘ The present question, my Lords, is, I say,
‘ in my opinion, a question of this nature: If it
‘ were to be put, I should be under no difficulty
‘ in giving my negative to it, because, I think,
‘ the sending of this message to the other house
‘ singly, was neither contrary to the customs of
‘ Parliament, nor any way derogatory to the
‘ rights or privileges of this house. His Majesty,
‘ in his speech from the throne, acquainted us of
‘ the just and necessary war he was engaged in,
‘ and in our presence demanded of the other
‘ house such effectual supplies, as might enable
‘ him to carry on the war with vigour. In our
‘ presence he told the other house, that he had
‘ ordered the estimates, for the service of the en-
‘ suing year, to be laid before them; but could
‘ any Lord of this house, or any member of the
‘ other, then imagine, that estimates could be
‘ made of all the services that in time of war
‘ might become necessary? We all know, my
‘ Lords, that in time of war, the most effectual
‘ measures for carrying it on with success, are ge-
‘ nerally such as ought to be kept secret, till the
‘ very moment of execution. The preparations
‘ for the execution of such measures must be at-
‘ tended with an extraordinary expence, and it is
‘ impossible to lay any estimate of that expence
‘ before either house of Parliament, without di-
‘ vulging those measures which are to be carried
‘ on. Therefore, I think, from his Majesty’s
‘ speech itself, we could not but expect, that, be-
‘ sides the estimates usually laid before the other
‘ house, and which might be laid before them
‘ without divulging those measures that ought to
‘ be kept secret, I say, we could not but from
‘ thence expect, that some certain sum would be
‘ demanded for the carrying on of measures, that
‘ neither could, nor ought to be communicated;
‘ and the ascertaining of that sum may, I think,

' properly be called the estimate for those services
 ' or measures ; so that the message complained of,
 ' I must look upon as an additional estimate, or
 ' as an extension of the estimates previously laid
 ' before that house ; and I do not think it is con-
 ' trary to the customs of Parliament, or deroga-
 ' tory to the privileges of this house, in his Ma-
 ' jesty, to lay, or to order to be laid, any sort of
 ' estimate before the other house, without order-
 ' ing it at the same time to be laid before this.

' From the journals of Parliament, my Lords,
 ' it will appear, that during the war in Queen
 ' *Anne's* reign, there were many such messages
 ' sent to the house of Commons only. Nay,
 ' during the whole war, it was in every session
 ' the custom, to enable her Majesty to apply any
 ' part of the supplies granted in that session, to
 ' secret, or not then thought of services. And
 ' so far was this house at that time from imagin-
 ' ing, they were to be consulted with respect to
 ' every warlike measure, the crown might think
 ' proper to undertake, that those disappropriating
 ' clauses, as I may call them, were always agreed
 ' to without the least intimation from the crown,
 ' that any secret measures were then under con-
 ' sideration.

' I shall grant, my Lords, that when his Ma-
 ' jesty is to ask the advice of his Parliament, it is
 ' this house he ought principally to apply to. I
 ' shall likewise grant, that it is prudent in the
 ' crown to advise with its Parliament in all cases
 ' of great importance, unless they be such as re-
 ' quire great secrecy. His present Majesty has al-
 ' ways done so ; and has never, in the least, de-
 ' parted from that advice which has, from time
 ' to time, been given him by his Parliament.
 ' But, I hope, no Lord will say, that his Majesty
 ' is never to make the least step, without first
 ' consulting his Parliament ; and, in cases which
 ' require

‘ require secrecy, it is impossible for him to have
‘ the advice of his Parliament, because he cannot
‘ apply for it without divulging the secret. The
‘ measures he has now under consideration, and
‘ which will require some extraordinary expence,
‘ an estimate of which, or the amount of which,
‘ he has, according to custom, ordered to be laid
‘ before the other house, are measures which must
‘ be kept secret, and therefore they are such as
‘ he can have no advice about from his Parlia-
‘ ment. If he had, by message, applied for
‘ the advice of the other house about those, or
‘ about any measures, the noble Lord would have
‘ been right in his motion. A message for ad-
‘ vice sent singly to the other house, would cer-
‘ tainly have been derogatory to the privileges of
‘ this; but, his Majesty neither asks, nor can
‘ ask any advice as to those measures, either of
‘ them or us. As the measures must be kept se-
‘ cret, it would, in my opinion, have been ab-
‘ surd to have sent any message relating to
‘ them, to this house. His Majesty was obliged
‘ to tell the other house, that besides the estimates
‘ laid before them, some farther expence would
‘ be necessary for carrying on the war with vigour,
‘ of which no estimate could be laid before them,
‘ because the measures concerted for that purpose,
‘ were such as could not be communicated. Such
‘ a message could not, I am sure, be properly sent
‘ to this house; and, I must desire Lords to con-
‘ sider, how it would have sounded, to have de-
‘ fired our advice about measures, and at the same
‘ time to have told us, that those measures were
‘ such as could not be communicated to us.
‘ Therefore, I must think, that the not sending
‘ of this message to us, is so far from being dero-
‘ gatory to our privileges, that it would have
‘ been inconsistent with our dignity, to have sent
‘ it to us in the terms in which it was sent to the
‘ other

‘ other house, or in any terms in which it could
‘ have been conceived.

‘ Thus, my Lords, it appears, that his Maje-
‘ sty could not say any thing to us in relation to
‘ those measures, which render this extraordinary
‘ supply necessary; and, as to the supply itself,
‘ as well as the measures for which it is granted,
‘ we shall have an opportunity to give our con-
‘ sent to both, when the appropriation clause
‘ comes to receive the concurrence of this house,
‘ which it must do, before it can be passed into a
‘ law. Therefore, there can, in my opinion, be
‘ no just reason for this complaint, and I am sure,
‘ there is no precedent for it. That in 1726, is far
‘ from being an authority for it. The other house
‘ singly was then called the Parliament, which
‘ was certainly a mistake, and which might, per-
‘ haps, have been of bad consequence to the ho-
‘ nour and dignity of this house, if it had not
‘ been resented; but, in the message now under
‘ our consideration, the other house is neither
‘ called the Parliament, nor treated as such: It is
‘ treated only as that house of Parliament before
‘ which the estimates are usually laid, and in this,
‘ I think, no Lord can say, there is any mistake
‘ or impropriety, nor can it, in my opinion, in
‘ the least affect either the honour and dignity, or
‘ the rights and privileges of this house.

‘ For these reasons, my Lords, I should be un-
‘ der no difficulty in giving my negative to the
‘ motion; but, as other Lords may not be so
‘ fully convinced in this case as I am, and may
‘ therefore be unwilling to put a direct negative
‘ upon the motion, therefore, I think it the best
‘ way to put the previous question, and when
‘ that question is put, I shall most heartily give it
‘ my negative, in which, I hope, most of the
‘ Lords that hear me will concur.’

The

The Earl of *Chesterfield* was the next that stood up, whose speech was in substance thus:

‘ My Lords,

‘ I am surprized to hear the noble Duke say,
‘ that this message ought to be considered as an
‘ estimate, or that it could not have been con-
‘ ceived in such terms, as to make it proper for
‘ being communicated to this house. Is there any
‘ one word in the message, that can make it look
‘ like an estimate? Is there the least mention of
‘ any sum, either in general or particular? If his
‘ Majesty, in his message to the other house, had
‘ said, that he had under his consideration, cer-
‘ tain measures, which would occasion an extraor-
‘ dinary expence of 2 or 300,000*l.* not compre-
‘ hended in the estimates laid before them, there
‘ might then have been some reason to call it an
‘ estimate; though even in that case, it ought to
‘ have been communicated to this house, as well
‘ as the other. But in the words it is expressed,
‘ I think it impossible to find out a pretence for
‘ calling it an estimate, or any thing like an
‘ estimate; at least I must think, that those who
‘ have found out such a pretence, are mighty
‘ ingenious in contriving how to palliate or ex-
‘ cuse an affront, that has been put upon this as-
‘ sembly; which is a sort of ingenuity that would
‘ not look very well in private life, whatever it
‘ may do in publick. In private life, if a man
‘ should, without designing an affront, do or say
‘ any thing, or commit any mistake or oversight,
‘ that might look like putting an affront upon
‘ another, he would be in the right, should he
‘ use all his art to explain and excuse himself;
‘ but if the person who receives the affront,
‘ should make use of any art or ingenuity for pal-
‘ liating the affront put upon him, I should be
‘ apt to conclude, that such a person had not
‘ such

Earl of *Chesterfield's*
speech.

‘ such a regard to his own honour, as he ought to
‘ have.

‘ I am, therefore, not a little surprized, to find
‘ among your Lordships, so much art made use
‘ of upon this occasion, and such far-fetch’d
‘ glosses put upon this message, in order to pal-
‘ liate or excuse the neglect, or rather contempt,
‘ that has been shewn us. But, my Lords, it is
‘ impossible, in my opinion, to find any excuse
‘ that can have the least weight upon those, who
‘ have a true and a nice regard to the honour of
‘ this assembly. The message is plainly this, that
‘ his Majesty has under his consideration, certain
‘ secret measures or designs for attacking or dis-
‘ tressing the enemy, which will occasion an ex-
‘ traordinary expence, the particulars of which he
‘ cannot, for the sake of secrecy, communicate,
‘ but desires the assistance of the other house, for
‘ enabling him to carry them on, in the most ef-
‘ fectual manner. Is not this a communication of
‘ his Majesty’s designs, as far as they could be
‘ communicated? And ought not we to have had
‘ this communication made to us, as well as the
‘ other house? Or was it less necessary to ask our
‘ assistance, than to ask the assistance of the other
‘ house? No minister could think it was, but he
‘ who thinks himself so sure of our favours, that
‘ they are not worth asking. This, my Lords,
‘ is treating us like the most common prostitutes.
‘ We have from his Majesty heard of augmenta-
‘ tions of our forces by sea and land, we have
‘ heard of raising a body of marines: When the
‘ supplies granted by the other house for these
‘ purposes, shall come before us, we shall know
‘ what they are for; and I do not question, but
‘ your Lordships will most readily give them your
‘ concurrence. But have we from his Majesty
‘ heard any thing of certain secret measures now
‘ under his Royal consideration? And if the other
‘ house

‘ house should grant a supply for those measures,
‘ can we concur in granting such a supply, when
‘ we do not know, that there are any such mea-
‘ sures. The appropriation clause may inform us,
‘ that the Commons have granted a certain sum of
‘ money for the carrying on of certain secret war-
‘ like measures, but it cannot inform us, that his
‘ Majesty then has, or ever had such measures in
‘ view; for this is an information we can take
‘ from none but his Majesty himself, and without
‘ this information, we shall act inconsistently with
‘ the honour and dignity of this house, if we
‘ give our concurrence to a supply granted for
‘ such a purpose.

‘ This, my Lords, must shew how necessary
‘ it was for his Majesty, to acquaint us by mes-
‘ sage with his having such measures under his
‘ consideration; and it was so easy to have form-
‘ ed a proper message for that purpose, that I am
‘ astonished to hear the possibility of it doubted
‘ of. Other Lords may, perhaps, much better
‘ understand the method of drawing up a message
‘ from the crown to this house, because they have
‘ of late years had great practice in this way,
‘ more, I hope, than I shall ever have occasion
‘ for; but, in my opinion, even the message sent
‘ to the Commons would have required but very
‘ little alteration in order to have made it a mes-
‘ sage proper to be sent to this house. If the
‘ words, *not comprehended in the estimates laid be-*
‘ *fore this house*, had been left out, and the word,
‘ *Lords*, put instead of the word, *Commons*, I
‘ can see no reason, why it might not have been
‘ a message proper enough to have been sent to
‘ this house. We should then have had a proper
‘ information of his Majesty’s having such mea-
‘ sures under his consideration; and we should
‘ have had an opportunity to approve of his Ma-
‘ jesty’s care and concern for the success of the
‘ war,

‘ war, and, perhaps, to give him some general advice in relation to the measures proper to be pursued, in case we had thought it necessary. I hope the danger of our presuming to give our advice upon so important an occasion, was not the reason of his Majesty’s being advised not to let us know, that he had any measures for the prosecution of the war under his consideration ; for I am sure, if it was, it ought to be resented in a much stronger manner, than the noble Lord has by his motion proposed.

‘ But, my Lords, whatever was the reason for neglecting, or purposely avoiding to communicate his Majesty’s intentions to us, at the same time they were communicated to the other house, it must appear, from what I have said, to be a most notorious and unprecedented slight put upon this house. I shall not say, my Lords, we were forgotten, or that any real injury has been done us. We were, I believe, remembered ; but it was, in order to put a designed affront upon us. We have not been injured, but we have been slighted, which is worse ; because a slight proceeds always from contempt, whereas an injury proceeds often from fear. A powerful, warlike, and jealous people can never be slighted ; but if their neighbours think them too powerful, they will, probably, take an opportunity, if they can lay hold of one, to do them a real injury, in order to diminish their power. It is the same with any assembly of men : They must be contemned, before they can be slighted ; and if we submit tamely to the slight we have upon this occasion met with, we may assure ourselves of meeting very soon with a second from the same hand, and so with a third, a fourth, till at last, we shall come to be contemned, slighted, and insulted by the whole world.

The

‘ The noble Lord was, therefore, much in the
‘ right to take notice of this slight, that has been
‘ put upon us, and to take notice of it in the
‘ most solemn manner. I hope the majority of
‘ your Lordships, at least, will join with him
‘ upon this occasion. His youth can be no reason
‘ for preventing the oldest Lord in this house
‘ from joining with him in such a just, such a ne-
‘ cessary, and such a modest sort of resentment.
‘ It is not the first time a nation has been saved
‘ by the vigilance, the alacrity, and the courage
‘ of a young man of quality. *Rome* was saved
‘ by a very young Lord, or Patrician, when
‘ many of those that were much older than he,
‘ were like to have ruined their country by their
‘ despair. When I say this, my Lords, every
‘ one must know, I mean the great *Scipio*, after-
‘ wards called *Africanus*, who, before he was
‘ twenty years of age, saved his country, by
‘ compelling those that were despairing, to take a
‘ solemn oath, that they should never leave nor
‘ forsake it. And if there be any amongst us,
‘ that despair of being able to preserve the dignity
‘ and authority of this house, I hope the example
‘ of the young Lords that made and seconded
‘ this motion, will revive their drooping courage,
‘ and make them resolve never to forsake or give
‘ up those rights and privileges, for which their
‘ ancestors have so bravely fought, and so often
‘ bled.

‘ But for God’s sake, my Lords, why should
‘ we be so shy of declaring our opinion upon this
‘ occasion? Many, I hope the majority of the
‘ Lords of this house, are of opinion, that the
‘ neglect lately shewn us, affects our honour in
‘ the most sensible part. Why should we refuse,
‘ or delay to reject or embrace this opinion? Let
‘ us peremptorily declare, whether it does, or
‘ does not. Suppose we should declare it does,
‘ by

‘ by agreeing to the present motion, what preju-
 ‘ dice can from thence ensue to the common-
 ‘ wealth? Such a resolution may, indeed, reflect
 ‘ a little upon the man, who was the occasion of
 ‘ this slight being put upon us. Who he may be,
 ‘ I cannot comprehend. Such a slight could not
 ‘ proceed from the crown itself, nor would it
 ‘ have been allowed, if the advice of any Lord
 ‘ of this house had been asked. Yet there are
 ‘ several amongst us, who have the honour to be
 ‘ of his Majesty’s council; but I must suppose,
 ‘ that none of them were consulted upon the oc-
 ‘ casion. I am sorry they were not: I hope they
 ‘ do not often find themselves so much neglected.
 ‘ But let this resolution, if agreed to, reflect upon
 ‘ whom it will, it can do no hurt to the common-
 ‘ wealth, nor to any community or body of men
 ‘ in the kingdom. In the preservation of the
 ‘ rights and privileges of this house, every com-
 ‘ munity, every body of men in the nation, have
 ‘ a concern. If ours should be brought into dan-
 ‘ ger, the rights and privileges of no body of
 ‘ men, nor of any particular man, in the *British*
 ‘ dominions could be secure. Therefore, my
 ‘ Lords, for our own sakes, for the sake of our
 ‘ fellow-subjects, for the sake of our King, for
 ‘ the sake of our country, we are obliged to be
 ‘ jealous of the rights and privileges of this
 ‘ house, and consequently, I think, we are obli-
 ‘ ged to agree immediately to this motion.’

The next speech we shall give, was made by
 the Lord Chancellor, who stood up again, and
 spoke to this effect, *viz.*

Lord Chan-
 cellor’s
 speech.

‘ My Lords,
 ‘ As I have yet given you no other trouble in
 ‘ this debate, than merely to state the question un-
 ‘ der your consideration, I shall now give you my
 ‘ opinion

‘ opinion upon it, which I shall do in as few
‘ words as possible. My Lords, if I thought
‘ that any of our rights or privileges had been in
‘ the least violated, by not sending the message
‘ complained of, to this house, at the same time
‘ it was sent to the Commons, no one of your
‘ Lordships could be more ready than I should
‘ be, to agree to this motion, or to any farther
‘ step that should be thought necessary for ascer-
‘ taining and securing our rights and privileges in
‘ time to come; but, I am so far from thinking
‘ it a violation, or even a neglect of any of our
‘ rights and privileges, that I think it was abso-
‘ lutely unnecessary, and would have been very
‘ imprudent, to have sent any message to this
‘ house, upon the subject this message related to.
‘ We know how strenuously, and with what
‘ warmth, the other house have for many years as-
‘ serted their having the sole right of granting
‘ supplies. We know what animosities and divi-
‘ sions have arisen between the two houses, as of-
‘ ten as any question has been started upon this
‘ subject; and every Lord must, with terror, form
‘ in his mind, an Idea of the unhappy state of
‘ anarchy this nation would be thrown into;
‘ should a breach happen in our present circum-
‘ stance between our two houses of Parliament.
‘ This, I am convinced, would have been the
‘ consequence, had his Majesty sent to this house,
‘ a message of the same kind with that sent to the
‘ other. The Commons would have immediately
‘ taken the alarm, and would have said, that his
‘ Majesty, by such a message, had in a manner
‘ directed us to interfere with, and incroach upon
‘ them in their sole right of granting supplies.

‘ Thus I have shewn, my Lords, that it would
‘ have been very imprudent in his Majesty to have
‘ sent any message upon this occasion to us; and
‘ that none of our rights or privileges, or even

‘ the deference that is due to us, made the sending of such a message to this house necessary, I shall now endeavour to shew. My Lords, there are three sorts of messages which are usually sent by the crown, to both or either house of Parliament. The first sort are such as usually are, and ought to be sent to both houses: The second, such as are, and ought to be sent but to one house; and the third, such as ought to be sent to one or other of the two houses, according to the nature of the business to which they relate. Of the first sort are all messages for advice, or for any new powers, especially in affairs that relate to the publick in general; as to which we all know, that his present Majesty has been very exact, and has never shewn the least sort of neglect to one or other of his houses of Parliament. Of the second sort, are all messages that relate to the Peerage, such as that in the year 1718, which was sent to this house only, and likewise all messages relating any way to judicature, which are to be sent to this house singly, without taking notice of the other, because the cognizance of all such affairs belongs solely to this house; and yet, if an act of Parliament be necessary for introducing any new regulation, with respect to either of these cases, we must have the concurrence of the other house, before that regulation can be passed into a law. Of this second sort likewise are all messages relating singly to the business of supplies, which, in order to prevent a breach between the two houses of Parliament, are now to be sent singly to the other house, without taking notice of this; and yet the grants of those supplies, that are made by the other house, before they can be rendered effectual by being passed into a law, must have the concurrence of this. And of the third sort, are all messages which are sent to
‘ either

‘ either house of Parliament, relating to any one
‘ particular affair, at that time under the confide-
‘ ration of that house.

‘ Now, my Lords, if we consider the message
‘ upon which the noble Lord’s motion is found-
‘ ed, and which he was pleased to read to you,
‘ we must conclude, that it is one of that sort of
‘ messages which are now to be sent singly to the
‘ other house, without taking notice of this; be-
‘ cause it is a message that relates singly to the bu-
‘ siness of supplies. His Majesty does not there-
‘ by desire the advice of Parliament, nor does he
‘ desire any extraordinary powers. The word
‘ measures are, indeed, mentioned, but they are
‘ such measures as neither are nor can be explain-
‘ ed, therefore his Majesty could neither desire
‘ nor expect the advice of either house of Parlia-
‘ ment in relation to them: And as they are mea-
‘ sures which his Majesty, it seems, may under-
‘ take and carry on without any new powers, he
‘ had no occasion to ask for such, either from us
‘ or the Commons. He wants nothing but a sup-
‘ ply of money for that purpose, and that the
‘ other house insists upon the sole privilege of
‘ granting; so that if his Majesty had asked any
‘ such supply of us, they would certainly have
‘ look’d upon it as an incroachment upon their
‘ privileges; and as this is a point we have never
‘ yet given up, it would of course have occasion-
‘ ed a breach between the two houses. That this
‘ would have been the consequence, we may be
‘ convinced of, from the method in which this
‘ message was treated by the other house. Upon
‘ their receiving this message, they did not vote
‘ an address by way of answer to the crown,
‘ which is the usual method upon other occa-
‘ sions; but they immediately referred it to the
‘ committee of supply, and in that committee, I
‘ suppose, they have granted such a sum, as they
‘ thought

' thought sufficient for the purpose; and that
 ' sum will, in the appropriation bill, be appro-
 ' priated to carry on such measures, as his Ma-
 ' jesty shall judge necessary in the further prosecu-
 ' tion of the war. When this clause comes be-
 ' fore us for our concurrence, we have no occa-
 ' sion to enquire, whether his Majesty has any,
 ' or what measures under his consideration. From
 ' the nature of things we know, that in time of
 ' war, some measures may become necessary, which
 ' could neither be particularly communicated to, nor
 ' particularly provided for, by Parliament, either
 ' because it was necessary to keep them secret, or
 ' because they were not then thought of; and
 ' therefore, we could not but expect, that some
 ' such grant would be made by the other house,
 ' and would be sent up for our concurrence. Nay,
 ' even from his Majesty's speech we must have
 ' expected some such thing; for there, his Maje-
 ' sty tells us, that the services will be various and
 ' extensive; from whence we could not but sup-
 ' pose, that particular estimates could not be made
 ' up for every service that might occur in the
 ' course of this ensuing year.

' From what I have said, my Lords, I hope it
 ' will appear, that the sending of this message to
 ' the Commons singly, without taking notice of
 ' this house, was no slight, nor an attack upon
 ' any of our rights or privileges, and that it
 ' would have been very imprudent in his Majesty
 ' to have sent a message of this kind to us; and
 ' it will likewise, I hope, from thence appear,
 ' that it would not only be wrong, but very im-
 ' prudent in us, to agree to the resolution propo-
 ' sed; for the same reasons that would have
 ' made it imprudent in his Majesty to send any
 ' such message to us, must make it imprudent in
 ' us to agree to such a resolution. If we should
 ' agree to it, we may expect, that the other house
 ' will

‘ will presently take the alarm. They will cer-
 ‘ tainly hear something of the resolution: They
 ‘ will thereupon order a committee to search our
 ‘ journals, which they have a right to do; and
 ‘ upon that committee’s reporting, that they have
 ‘ found such a resolution in our journals, the other
 ‘ house will certainly come to such resolutions, as
 ‘ must occasion a breach between the two houses:
 ‘ How fatal the consequences of this breach may
 ‘ be to the commonwealth, in our present circum-
 ‘ stances, I shall leave to your Lordships confi-
 ‘ deration.

‘ This must shew, my Lords, that we ought
 ‘ to be extremely shy of agreeing to the resolution
 ‘ proposed; and at the same time I shall grant,
 ‘ that we ought also to be shy of giving it a di-
 ‘ rect negative; for though what is now com-
 ‘ plained of, is no violation of our rights and pri-
 ‘ vileges, nor of that deference that is due to us
 ‘ from the crown; yet, if we should put a flat
 ‘ negative upon this motion, as it will stand upon
 ‘ record in our journals, it may hereafter be made
 ‘ a precedent for something, that will be a real
 ‘ and downright violation of our rights and pri-
 ‘ vileges, or of that regard which ought to be
 ‘ shewn us, as the higher house of Parliament;
 ‘ and for this reason, I think, it is the most pru-
 ‘ dent method to suspend the decision of this af-
 ‘ fair, by putting the previous question upon the
 ‘ motion.’

The next speech, and the last we shall give
 upon this occasion, was made by the Lord *Carteret*, who standing up a third time, spoke in sub-
 stance as follows, *viz.*

‘ My Lords,

‘ I am sorry I should be so often obliged to Lord Carteret’s speech.
 ‘ trouble your Lordships upon this occasion; but

‘ really, the more I hear said against this resolution,
‘ the more important the affair seems to grow, the
‘ more necessary, I think, it becomes for us to
‘ agree immediately to what my noble friend has
‘ been pleased to propose. His motion I at first
‘ thought would have had a good effect, even
‘ though our approbation of it should have been
‘ suspended by the previous question; but from
‘ what the noble Lord, who spoke last against the
‘ motion, has said, I find the motion will have
‘ no effect upon the future conduct of ministers,
‘ unless it now meets with the approbation of this
‘ house. My Lords, it is impossible for any mi-
‘ nister or ambitious Prince to ruin our constitu-
‘ tion, without first prostituting the honour, and
‘ debasing the dignity of this house; and this
‘ can never be done without our own concurrence
‘ or connivance. If what has been last said against
‘ this motion, be allowed to have any influence
‘ upon this assembly, every future minister that
‘ pleases will, at every turn, take an occasion to
‘ affront us, and to violate our rights and privi-
‘ leges, and will plead for his excuse, that he
‘ durst not do otherwise, for fear of alarming the
‘ other house, and occasioning a breach between
‘ the two houses of Parliament. Nay, his crea-
‘ tures in this house, as a future minister may
‘ have some, though, I am sure, no minister has
‘ any such at present, will tell us, that we must
‘ not attempt to vindicate our honour, or assert our
‘ undoubted rights and privileges, for fear of oc-
‘ casioning a breach between the two houses; and
‘ will be sure to represent to us in the most hide-
‘ ous light, the fatal consequences of such a
‘ breach.

‘ I know, my Lords, that a breach, or a dis-
‘ pute about privileges, between the two houses of
‘ Parliament, is a very troublesome affair: I am
‘ sensible, that it ought to be avoided as much as
‘ possible;

‘ possible ; but it was never yet attended with
‘ any fatal consequence. When such a dispute
‘ happens, one or other must be in the wrong ;
‘ and when men are allowed time to cool, and to
‘ think deliberately upon the subject, they gene-
‘ rally at last give ear to reason, or some methods
‘ are found out to put an end to the dispute with-
‘ out a determination ; one of which has in a
‘ short time been the consequence of all the dis-
‘ putes that have happened between us. Suppose
‘ the other house, at the instigation of some am-
‘ bitious and artful member, should be so unrea-
‘ sonable, as to find fault with our vindicating
‘ our honour, and asserting, against an incroach-
‘ ing and arrogant minister, that regard which is
‘ due to us from the crown, are we therefore to
‘ cease doing our duty ? Or must we, for fear of
‘ this consequence, submit tamely to every indig-
‘ nity such a minister may please to put upon us ?

‘ For God’s sake, my Lords, do not demean
‘ yourselves so much, as to allow such an argu-
‘ ment to have any weight in this debate. Con-
‘ sider alone, whether in the present case you
‘ have been neglected, and if you think we have,
‘ I am certain you will resolve to vindicate your
‘ honour, let the consequence be what it will.
‘ But, in my opinion, there is not the least dan-
‘ ger of the other house’s taking amiss any resolu-
‘ tion you can come to upon this occasion. There
‘ would not have been the least danger, as the
‘ noble Lord has been pleased to insinuate, of
‘ their taking it amiss, had his Majesty sent this
‘ message to us, at the same time he sent it to
‘ them. His Lordship may distinguish messages
‘ into as many sorts as he pleases, but I must in-
‘ sist upon it, that all messages that relate singly
‘ to the business of supplies, are not to be sent to
‘ the other house singly, without taking notice of
‘ this. A message for a vote of credit, is a mes-

' sage that relates singly to the business of sup-
 ' plies, and yet no member of the other house, I
 ' believe, ever imagined, that a message for a
 ' vote of credit ought not to be sent to us, as
 ' well as them. My Lords, this very message is
 ' a message for credit. It is a message for an act
 ' of credit, which is still more than a vote of
 ' credit. The other house may limit the credit
 ' they give upon this occasion, as well as they
 ' generally do the credit they give by a vote;
 ' but whatever the sum may be that is granted or
 ' promised, for doing what we know nothing of,
 ' it is a grant or vote of credit, and every mes-
 ' sage desiring such a vote or grant, ought to be
 ' sent at the same time to both houses. The
 ' other house's referring this message immediately
 ' to the committee of supply, without voting an
 ' address by way of return to it, is no argument
 ' for shewing, that they thought the message
 ' ought not to have been communicated to this
 ' house. Last session they treated the message
 ' then sent in the same manner. Though it was
 ' a message for a vote or an act of confidence, as
 ' well as credit, they referred it immediately to
 ' the committee of supply, without thinking of
 ' addressing his Majesty by way of return: Nor
 ' did they think of taking it amiss, that the mes-
 ' sage was communicated to us, as well as them.
 ' Have we not within these few years seen several
 ' messages for a vote of credit only? Have not
 ' all these messages been sent at the same time to
 ' both houses? And did the other house ever
 ' think of taking it amiss, that such a message
 ' was communicated to this house? The case
 ' would have been the same, had this message
 ' been sent to us: The other house would not
 ' have so much as thought of taking it amiss;
 ' nor would ever such a thought have entered, I
 ' believe, into any man's head, if it had not been

‘ to excuse the blunder of a minister, which, I
‘ think, is the softest name I can give the neg-
‘ lect, that has been shewn us upon this occa-
‘ sion.

‘ I am really surprized to hear any Lord
‘ of this house arguing from the sole right the
‘ Commons pretend to, of granting supplies, that
‘ they may from thence take occasion to prevent
‘ all sort of communication between the crown
‘ and this house, which might be the case, if
‘ they should be allowed to be judges, what sort
‘ of messages ought to be sent to this house. My
‘ Lords, we have never yet yielded to them the
‘ sole and exclusive right of granting supplies, or
‘ that we have not a right to alter and amend
‘ those money-bills they send up to us. It was
‘ but in the year 1696, that they came to a resolu-
‘ tion, which they afterwards made a standing or-
‘ der, not to confer with this house about any
‘ amendment made by us to a money-bill, and
‘ this is the only determination this affair has as
‘ yet met with, which is a determination we are
‘ not in the least obliged to stand to. This very
‘ dispute, it is true, occasioned a breach between
‘ the two houses in the year 1671, which was
‘ the occasion of dropping one of the money-
‘ bills sent up by the Commons that session; but
‘ this was so far from being a misfortune, that it
‘ was lucky for the nation, because it prevented
‘ the entire ruin of the *Dutch*; for King *Charles II.*
‘ had in that year been drawn into an alliance
‘ with *France* for attacking *Holland*, which was
‘ accordingly soon after put in execution; but the
‘ loss of this money-bill prevented his Majesty’s
‘ attacking the *Dutch* with that vigour he might
‘ otherwise have done, and this gave them time
‘ to prepare, and to withstand the *French* attack
‘ by land, much better than they could have
‘ done, had they at the same time been vigorously
‘ attacked

‘ attacked by sea ; so that our insisting strenuously
‘ upon our rights at that time, though it occa-
‘ sioned a breach between the two houses, was of
‘ great service to this nation, and to *Europe* in
‘ general.

‘ This, my Lords, may serve as a proof of
‘ what I take to be a general rule in all human af-
‘ fairs, which is, that in every case that occurs,
‘ we ought to do our duty, and trust the event
‘ to Providence. But in the present case, it is
‘ evident, that our agreeing to this resolution can
‘ occasion no breach between the two houses,
‘ nor be attended with any bad consequence ; for
‘ I have shewn, that the Commons could not
‘ have taken it amiss, had this message been com-
‘ municated to us, at the same time it was to
‘ them, and consequently they cannot take amiss
‘ our agreeing to the resolution proposed. I be-
‘ lieve, most of them will agree with me in opi-
‘ nion, that it is a dangerous thing for the crown
‘ to send any message in writing to either of the
‘ houses, without taking notice of the other ; for
‘ there is a great difference between a message in
‘ writing, and those verbal messages sent by some
‘ of the King’s ministers or servants. These last,
‘ indeed, may be sent to either house, according
‘ to the nature of the affair to which they relate ;
‘ but a solemn message in writing, I will venture
‘ to say, ought generally to be sent to both
‘ houses. If a message relating to judicature
‘ should be sent to this house singly, the other
‘ might probably take it ill ; because they have
‘ never allow’d us the sole right of being the su-
‘ preme judicature, no more than we have allow-
‘ ed them the sole right of granting supplies.
‘ And even with regard to the Peerage, if a mes-
‘ sage in writing were necessary for introducing or
‘ passing any law relating to it, I believe the safest
‘ way would be, to send it to both houses ; but

‘ I cannot conceive, how a message can be necessary in either of these cases: Though no bill becomes a law, till it receives the Royal Assent, yet we have, in both houses, a power to bring in and pass such bills, as we think necessary for the publick good, or the preservation of the constitution, without having leave from the crown by message, or any other way; for upon such occasions no prerogative ought to be allowed to stand in our way.

‘ I know that in the year 1718, a message in writing came to this house relating to the Peerage bill; and, my Lords, it was a wise, a tender, and a salutary message: I wish I could see such another: I am sure, if I could expect to see such another, I should be among the first to move for bringing again such a bill as that was, into this house. If that bill had passed into a law, our constitution would have been more secure, and this house a better barrier against the ambition of ministers, than it is at present. We know by whom it was opposed: We know it was opposed by one, who has now great weight in the other house; and while he has the same weight, I believe we shall never see the same bill revived. But the message sent to us by the crown upon that occasion, was far from being necessary. It proceeded entirely from the goodness of the late King, who was willing to give that early testimony of his approbation, in order to remove the clamours of some courtiers, who seemed to be against the bill; and had that message been likewise communicated to the Commons, I believe it would have been right: I cannot think it would have been attended with any bad consequence. For in all cases where a new law is necessary, if a solemn message in writing from the crown be necessary, as the law must have the concurrence of both
‘ houses,

‘ houses, the message ought regularly, I think,
‘ to be sent to both.

‘ We have been told, my Lords, that during
‘ the late war there were several precedents of
‘ such messages as this being sent to the other
‘ house, without taking any notice of this. I
‘ wish the noble Lords had mentioned but one of
‘ these several precedents, I am sure I know of
‘ none. I have shewn, that the message now un-
‘ der our consideration is directly a message for a
‘ vote of credit: It is, with respect to the credit
‘ part, expressly the same with that message which
‘ was sent last year to both houses, and has been
‘ treated in the same manner by the other house;
‘ and before the year 1717, so far as I remember,
‘ there was never any such message sent to both,
‘ or to either house of Parliament. That message,
‘ we know, was violently opposed, and particu-
‘ larly by an eminent member of the other house,
‘ who has since, it seems, got a new light; for
‘ he has been not only the supporter, but, I be-
‘ lieve, the adviser of many such messages since
‘ that time. During the late war, I can think of
‘ no message in writing, relating to the war, but
‘ what was sent to both houses of Parliament.
‘ After the unfortunate battle of *Almanza*, there
‘ was a message in writing from the crown; but
‘ it was sent to both houses. After the death of
‘ the Emperor *Joseph*, there was a message in
‘ writing from the crown; but it was sent to
‘ both houses. All the messages I can think of,
‘ that related to the publick in general, have been
‘ sent to each house of Parliament; for it is but
‘ of late, that this method of sending messages
‘ has been begun. When our Sovereign had any
‘ thing new to communicate, or any thing new to
‘ ask, the ancient method was, to come to his
‘ Parliament, and make a new speech; and I wish
‘ this method had never been altered; for it is more
‘ solemn,

‘ solemn, and more becoming that regard which
‘ our Sovereign ought to shew to the supreme
‘ council of the nation.

‘ Suppose, my Lords, we should think it ne-
‘ cessary to disagree to the credit desired by the
‘ crown. Suppose we were convinced, that the credit
‘ or money desired would be employed in carrying
‘ on measures, that must redound to the prejudice
‘ of the nation. This was the case in the year 1671,
‘ and may again be the case: I am far from think-
‘ ing it is so at present; but if it were, we could,
‘ in this method, have no opportunity of refusing
‘ this credit, but by doing, perhaps, an infinite
‘ prejudice to the publick; for the clause of ap-
‘ propriation, with respect to the sum granted by
‘ the other house, in pursuance of this message,
‘ will certainly come up to us in some money-bill,
‘ which the publick service necessarily requires to
‘ pass; and if we should think it necessary to
‘ throw out the clause, we must of course throw
‘ out the bill, or occasion a breach between the
‘ two houses of Parliament, which, the noble
‘ Lords, who are against this motion, have told
‘ us, would be of the most terrible consequence
‘ in our present circumstances.

‘ A noble Lord has told us, that the sum
‘ granted by the other house in compliance with
‘ this message, will, in the clause of appropria-
‘ tion to be sent up to us, be appropriated to the
‘ carrying on of such measures, as his Majesty
‘ shall think proper, in the further prosecution of
‘ the war. My Lords, I know nothing of the
‘ words that may be made use of in that clause;
‘ but suppose it comes up in these words, and
‘ that the sum granted may be 200,000*l.* is not
‘ this giving the crown a credit for 200,000*l.* in
‘ the very same manner we gave it a credit last
‘ year for 500,000*l.*? The only difference is,
‘ that last year, his Majesty deigned to ask it of
‘ us,

‘ us, and to tell us, it was necessary; but this
 ‘ year, it seems, we are to give it without asking,
 ‘ and without knowing it is necessary. The noble
 ‘ Lord says, the necessity of giving such a credit
 ‘ in time of war, appears from the nature of
 ‘ things. My Lords, the very contrary appears
 ‘ from experience; for during the long and hea-
 ‘ vy war in Queen *Anne*’s time, no such credit
 ‘ was ever given. Her Majesty was often im-
 ‘ power’d to apply any part of the supplies to se-
 ‘ cret or unthought-of services; but there never
 ‘ was any particular sum granted for that pur-
 ‘ pose: Therefore, if we judge from experience,
 ‘ as well as the nature of things, we must sup-
 ‘ pose, that no such credit is necessary, and con-
 ‘ sequently, as the crown has neither told us that
 ‘ it is, nor asked any such of us, we must throw
 ‘ out that clause, and of course the money-bill in
 ‘ which it is inserted.

‘ The noble Lord seemed to be sensible, that
 ‘ the necessity of this credit was not very appa-
 ‘ rent from the nature of things, and therefore,
 ‘ he endeavoured to shew, that his Majesty had
 ‘ told us of it, and asked for it in his speech
 ‘ from the throne. Whether any such thing can be
 ‘ gathered from the words he mentioned, or from
 ‘ any words in his Majesty’s speech, I must leave
 ‘ to your Lordships to judge. In time of war,
 ‘ the services must always be various and exten-
 ‘ sive; but we could not suppose, that his Maje-
 ‘ sty thereby meant, that we must now grant a
 ‘ particular credit for those services, or that such
 ‘ a thing would be necessary now, though it was
 ‘ never before thought necessary. I shall grant,
 ‘ my Lords, that some few words might very
 ‘ easily have been inserted in his Majesty’s speech,
 ‘ which would have prevented the necessity of
 ‘ sending this message to either house of Parlia-
 ‘ ment; but his ministers, by not thinking of,
 ‘ and

‘ and foreseeing things before-hand, have brought
 ‘ themselves into this labyrinth ; and I wish with
 ‘ all my heart, they may not, by the same sort
 ‘ of political thoughtlessness and blindness, have
 ‘ brought the nation into such a labyrinth, as we
 ‘ shall not soon, or easily get out of.

‘ I must beg pardon for having given your
 ‘ Lordships so much trouble ; but the motion
 ‘ now under our consideration has, by the debate
 ‘ upon it, become an affair of so serious a nature,
 ‘ that I think the very being of this house con-
 ‘ cerned in the question. A particular and distinct
 ‘ correspondence is now opened between the
 ‘ Crown and the Commons, and that too about
 ‘ affairs which relate to the publick in general,
 ‘ affairs of the greatest importance: That corre-
 ‘ spondence may increase to such a degree, as to
 ‘ render your Lordships quite useless ; and if you
 ‘ should once become so, you may depend upon
 ‘ your being at last voted useless by the other
 ‘ house, as you have been heretofore. I thought
 ‘ it my duty to oppose with all my might, the
 ‘ first approach of such another misfortune. Our
 ‘ honour, our very being requires an immediate
 ‘ assent to this motion ; and as I look upon the
 ‘ previous question to be a sort of negative, I shall,
 ‘ therefore, be against our disagreeing to the mo-
 ‘ tion, by that or any other method.’

The previous question being put, it passed in
 the negative, 68 not contents, to 32 contents.

The house of Commons having, in this session, passed and sent to the house of Lords a bill for making more effectual the laws now in being for disabling persons from being chosen members of, or sitting or voting in, the house of Commons, who have any pension during pleasure, or for any number of years, or any office held in trust for them ;

Pension bill
 passed by the
 Commons;
 and sent to
 the Lords.

them; the said bill was read a second time in their Lordships house on *Wednesday, March 19*, and a motion made for committing it; whereupon the Lord *Walpole* stood up, and moved for reading some parts of the journals of that house, in the years 1729, 30, 31, and 32, relating to bills of the same nature, sent up by the other, and rejected by that house; and these journals being accordingly read, his Lordship went on thus:

‘ My Lords,

Lord *Wal-*
pole's speech
and motion
against com-
mitting this
bill.

‘ From these journals it appears, that a bill
‘ with the very same title has been already four
‘ times sent up from the other house, and as of-
‘ ten rejected by this, which gave me a curiosity,
‘ as soon as the bill came up, to look into it, and
‘ to compare it with the bill so often rejected;
‘ and, I must say, I was greatly surprized, when
‘ I found it was almost word for word the same,
‘ because I really take it to be an affront offered
‘ to us, to send up a fifth time the very same bill
‘ that has, so lately, been four times rejected by
‘ us. Surely, those who were the promoters of
‘ this bill must think, that we are either short in
‘ our memories, or variable in our judgments;
‘ for the circumstances of the nation are exactly
‘ the same now, as they were then; and though
‘ we have several young Lords come into the
‘ house since that time, yet, I am sure, if all
‘ those that were, upon former occasions, for re-
‘ jecting the bill, be still of the same opinion, I
‘ may easily judge of its fate.

‘ This, my Lords, I should think sufficient,
‘ upon the present occasion, for prevailing with
‘ your Lordships to put a negative upon this mo-
‘ tion, if every Lord now present had been here,
‘ upon former occasions, when this affair was
‘ fully debated; but, as there are now several
‘ Lords here, that were not then present, I shall
‘ beg

‘ beg leave but just to touch upon some of the
‘ reasons formerly urged against this bill, and
‘ which are now full as strong as they were at that
‘ time, nay, some of them, I think, much strong-
‘ er. By wise politicians, my Lords, it has always
‘ been laid down as a maxim, not to make any
‘ alterations in the fundamental forms of your civil
‘ government or constitution, unless some grievance
‘ or inconvenience, that is sensibly felt, render it
‘ absolutely necessary; and the reasons are very
‘ plain, because such alterations are generally at-
‘ tended with convulsions in the state, and because
‘ the remedies you provide, are often found to be
‘ worse than the grievances you intended to cure.
‘ This maxim, therefore, ought always to be ob-
‘ served, in time of peace as well as in time of
‘ war; but, in time of war, we ought to be much
‘ more cautious of departing from it, than in time
‘ of peace.

‘ Now, my Lords, according to this maxim,
‘ we must either suppose, that there is corruption
‘ in the other house, and that of the worst sort;
‘ or we must allow, that we have now, in time of
‘ war, a stronger reason for rejecting this bill than
‘ we ever had before. To suppose that there is
‘ corruption in the other house of Parliament, and
‘ that sort of corruption too, which consists in
‘ ready money, or a private pension, would be
‘ throwing a very great, and, I hope, a very un-
‘ just slander upon the other house; but this I
‘ should be very easy about, considering how often
‘ they have sent this bill up to us, if it did not,
‘ at the same time, throw a very great, and, I am
‘ sure, a very unjust slander upon his Majesty’s
‘ government. My Lords, it is a crime to cor-
‘ rupt, as well as to be corrupted; and as there
‘ can be no corrupted unless there be a corruptor,
‘ to suppose that there is, in the other house, any
‘ man corrupted by the crown, is to suppose that

‘ the crown is guilty of a most infamous crime,
‘ which no Lord in this house will, I am sure,
‘ suppose, during his present Majesty’s reign.

‘ We cannot even suppose, my Lords, that any
‘ of those employed by his Majesty in the admini-
‘ stration, are guilty of corrupting the members
‘ of the other house, because it is not in their
‘ power. They can grant no pension but by a
‘ warrant from his Majesty; they can give no
‘ money, because they have no publick money but
‘ what they must account for to his Majesty, or
‘ to Parliament. As for that part of the publick
‘ money which they must account for to Parlia-
‘ ment, no man will suppose, they can give any
‘ part of it for bribing the members; and as for
‘ that part which they must account for to his
‘ Majesty, they can give none of it, without let-
‘ ting his Majesty into the secret, and making him
‘ a sort of partner in their crime, which no man
‘ will suppose they dare attempt. They can,
‘ therefore, have no money for this purpose, un-
‘ less they should make use of their own private
‘ fortunes; and, for such a purpose, no private
‘ fortune can be supposed to be equal. But sup-
‘ pose it were in their power, I do not believe it
‘ is in their inclination; and, I hope, many Lords
‘ in this house are of my opinion. I have the
‘ honour to be nearly related to some of those em-
‘ ployed in the administration: From thence I
‘ have had an opportunity of knowing their most
‘ secret thoughts; and from thence I have formed
‘ my opinion. Therefore, if it is neither in the
‘ inclination, nor in the power of any one employ-
‘ ed in the administration, to corrupt the members
‘ of the other house, what occasion can we have,
‘ would it not be altogether imprudent in us, to
‘ make an alteration in one of the most funda-
‘ mental parts of our constitution, in order to
‘ guard against a grievance, which is neither felt,
‘ nor

‘ nor can be, in his present Majesty’s reign, so
‘ much as supposed?

‘ My Lords, the prerogative our Sovereign has
‘ of rewarding merit, in what shape, or in what
‘ manner, he pleases, is one of the most funda-
‘ mental, and one of the most useful parts of our
‘ constitution; and, an alteration in this respect,
‘ may not only occasion convulsions, which must
‘ be dangerous in time of war, but likewise, it
‘ may be attended with inconveniencies, which it
‘ is impossible to foresee. There are many sorts
‘ of publick services which cannot be immediately
‘ explained, which it would be inconsistent with
‘ the publick good to divulge; and yet, if this
‘ bill should pass into a law, his Majesty could
‘ reward no services in any member of the other
‘ house, without explaining and divulging those
‘ services; nay, and putting it in the power of
‘ that house to judge, whether those services de-
‘ served such a reward, which might occasion dis-
‘ putes between that house and the crown, and
‘ would certainly discourage every member of that
‘ house, from rendering any secret services to the
‘ publick.

‘ This, my Lords, would be a great prejudice
‘ to our civil government; and the frequent oaths
‘ that are to be introduced by this bill, would be
‘ of the most dangerous consequence, not only to
‘ our established religion, but even to natural reli-
‘ gion itself. In our antient polity, both religious
‘ and civil, it was a wise maxim, never to oblige
‘ or allow a man to swear, in any case, where
‘ self-interest was concerned, especially when the
‘ circumstances of the case were such as made it
‘ impossible to convict him of perjury, even tho’ he
‘ should be guilty of it; but this maxim seems to
‘ be quite overturned by this bill, and therefore,
‘ I am convinced it will introduce amongst us, an

‘ utter contempt of perjury, which is always followed by an utter contempt of religion.

‘ These, my Lords, are some of the reasons formerly made use of against this bill: They have already been four times approved of by this house: They are now stronger than ever they were before; and therefore, for the sake of your own character, as well as for the reason of the thing, I hope you will give this bill the same treatment, it has so often before met with.’

The next that spoke was the Lord *Talbot*, the purport of whose speech was thus:

‘ My Lords,

Lord *Talbot*’s
speech.

‘ Could any opposition to a measure, absolutely necessary for the preservation of the constitution, have surprized me, I should have been amazed at the reception given to the bill now under our consideration.

‘ The Commons, sensible of the prevalence of corruption, and well knowing the inevitable destruction attendant upon any government infected with that political contagion, have sent your Lordships a bill for securing their own integrity, and to prevent the dreadful effects, an evil so subtle and formidable might soon occasion, if not entirely eradicated. Nor is the bill founded upon *Utopian* and chimerical schemes of publick virtue; but so extremely requisite, that you have already in the statute books two laws calculated to obtain the same end: Notwithstanding which, it is still possible for ministerial craft, working upon abandoned prostitution, to evade and render them ineffectual.

‘ If you believe the Commons really intended, by their passing this bill, to support their own honour, and to preserve their own house uncontaminated by secret corruption, may they not
‘ with

‘ with reason resent your defeating so upright a
‘ design? May not it occasion a breach of that
‘ harmony, which we ought to endeavour to pro-
‘ mote between the two great legislative branches?
‘ And will not the whole nation espouse their
‘ cause, and warmly join in their honest indigna-
‘ tion?

‘ On the other hand, were it possible to sup-
‘ pose, they meant nothing by this bill, but to
‘ delude their constituents, by an appearance of
‘ zeal against that malignant influence, which may
‘ make those that were chosen as the guardians,
‘ become the subverters of the liberty of their
‘ country, would it be consistent with your digni-
‘ ty, with your duty to God and man, to be ac-
‘ cessory to the abominable craft? No, my Lords,
‘ this house can never sink so infamously low, as
‘ to co-operate in so mean, so contemptible, so
‘ profligate a jobb: You may be yourselves de-
‘ ceived, but you are incapable of deceiving.

‘ A private pension is a breach of trust; and if
‘ you refuse your assent to this bill, you in some
‘ measure give a sanction to the infringement of
‘ those laws it is intended to enforce.

‘ The noble Lord’s argument drawn from the
‘ four journals, he ordered to be read, concludes
‘ nothing, but that it was, at those times, the
‘ sense of the house to reject bills of the same na-
‘ ture. But, my Lords, there are many Lords
‘ now present, who did not sit in this house at
‘ any one of the periods referr’d to; and the Com-
‘ mons, after having been four times defeated,
‘ offering this bill to your Lordships, is a proof of
‘ their opinion of the absolute necessity of such a
‘ law.

‘ It was observed by the noble Lord, that the
‘ time is improper: Far otherwise is my opinion;
‘ for at an hour when the situation of affairs obli-
‘ ges the Parliament to impose heavy burdens up-

‘ on a nation, already labouring under the severe
 ‘ pressure of an enormous debt, are we not direct-
 ‘ ed by justice and prudence to give them the ut-
 ‘ most proofs in our power, of the integrity of
 ‘ those persons, by whom the oppressive taxes
 ‘ must necessarily be impos’d.

‘ The noble Lord hath said, passing this bill
 ‘ would be a slur upon the Commons. Surely it
 ‘ cannot be esteemed in that light, as they begin
 ‘ it themselves; for if by the bill’s passing their
 ‘ own assembly, the slur be not cast, the enacting
 ‘ so upright a bill, cannot reasonably be judged so.
 ‘ A Parliament in the second of *Henry VIII.* pass’d
 ‘ an act to annihilate all the debts the King had
 ‘ contracted upon loans. The reason given by
 ‘ historians is, that it was filled by his Majesty’s
 ‘ servants, with whom justice had not so much
 ‘ weight, as complaisance to the crown.

‘ The numbers of placemen in that Parliament
 ‘ are not specified; but, I believe, they did not
 ‘ amount to near three hundred in both houses,
 ‘ nor is there mention made of a single pensioner.
 ‘ The Parliament stigmatized by the name of
 ‘ pensioned Parliament, proposed an expurgatory
 ‘ oath, to clear themselves from that aspersions,
 ‘ containing many particulars, one of which was,
 ‘ That each member should swear, he had never
 ‘ given his vote in Parliament, for any reward or
 ‘ promise whatsoever. I sincerely wish that, to
 ‘ gratify the people, the same, or such another
 ‘ oath, should now be taken; and as the oath
 ‘ proposed by this bill will, I think, be rather
 ‘ more effectual, therefore I am for the bill’s being
 ‘ committed, and hope it will be passed into a
 ‘ law.’

The

The next speech we shall give upon this question, was that made by the Earl of *Hallifax*, which was to this effect, *viz.*

‘ My Lords,

‘ Unfit as I am to offer my thoughts to your Lordships, I shall undertake the task with pleasure, whenever my duty calls me to it. I was in hopes, however, that I should have had no occasion of troubling your Lordships to day: I was in hopes, that this bill, calculated for the independency of Parliament, after having received the unanimous sanction of the house of Commons, would not have met with an harder fate within these walls. I must confess, I am in the greatest difficulty, my Lords, how to reconcile the opposition it finds, with the warm zeal for the freedom of Parliament, and the tender regard to the constitution of it, which your Lordships have shewn upon so many other occasions. I am still more at a loss, my Lords, when I consider the weakness of argument, and shadow of reason, upon which such an opposition is founded.

Earl of *Hallifax*'s speech.

‘ Every friend to the Revolution must be zealous for fully obtaining those noble ends proposed by it; but this, my Lords, can never be, till the independency of Parliament is secured. To gain this essential point must be the wish of every honest heart; and tho’ many difficulties may occur, before the great scheme be complete, yet every step we take against the undue influence of power, still farther removes from us that fatal danger, by which this country may one day fall. We have less to fear, my Lords, from a foreign power abroad, than from a ministerial power at home. This the house of Commons is sensible of; and fearing they have not sufficient

‘ security for the independency of their members,
‘ desire your Lordships concurrence, to strengthen
‘ it, and to enforce those laws, already in being,
‘ against those notable friends to liberty, called
‘ pensioners: And shall we, my Lords, frustrate
‘ the good design? Shall we refuse them the se-
‘ curity they ask? and shall not the same reasons
‘ that weighed with our ancestors to enact laws,
‘ weigh with us for the enforcement of them?
‘ Were they not, my Lords, I should be apt to
‘ believe what I have often with concern heard,
‘ when I was abroad, That the *English* have the
‘ best body of laws now extant in the world, but
‘ want the execution of them.

‘ One objection, my Lords, that has been made
‘ to the bill by the noble Lord who spoke first is,
‘ That it would multiply oaths. If oaths are ever
‘ necessary, it is upon such solemn occasions as
‘ these, when a man enters upon the great trust
‘ reposed in him by his constituents. We swear
‘ to our King: This is an oath to our country.
‘ Many men, my Lords, will break their words,
‘ who dare not violate their oath; and fear has
‘ often an effect, when conscience has none. I
‘ can easily believe, my Lords, that there will be
‘ many wicked men in future times, who would
‘ betray their trust, evade the acts of Parliament,
‘ and receive their pension, if they could avoid
‘ the penalty due to perjury. — They would
‘ hazard their expulsion, so they escaped the pil-
‘ lory.

‘ Another reason, my Lords, that pleads
‘ strongly with me for this oath of purgation, is
‘ the difficulty a house of Commons is like to
‘ meet with, in the discovery of their prostituted
‘ members. If a future minister should follow the
‘ generous example of some of his predecessors,
‘ all papers, all necessary informations would be
‘ denied, and corruption be as secret as it is de-
‘ structive.

‘ destructive. Is it to be imagined, that a man vile
‘ enough, unlawfully to receive a pension, would
‘ be also weak enough to avow it himself? Kna-
‘ very and cunning are too often joined, to expect
‘ it. Is it to be supposed, that a corrupting mi-
‘ nister will ever confess, where he unwarrantably
‘ extends his bounty?

‘ It has also been said by the noble Lord, that
‘ passing this bill would prove a suspicion of the
‘ government. A free people, my Lords, must
‘ always be suspicious; and liberty must ever be
‘ upon its guard. Many, perhaps, my Lords,
‘ think, they have just grounds for suspicion,
‘ when a multiplicity of places, a numerous stand-
‘ ing army, an increase of taxes, and an immense
‘ civil list, have, during so many years of peace,
‘ born hard upon the subject. As to myself, my
‘ Lords, I am disposed to be much more candid
‘ in my opinion; and I wish I could persuade
‘ myself, that as such infinite sums of money pass
‘ through other channels, there was but little left
‘ for the worthy pensioners; but, I fear the case
‘ is different: I fear, my Lords, ’tis too easily to
‘ be proved, that if his Majesty’s civil list was
‘ exonerated of all unnecessary pensions, he might
‘ afford (as Queen *Anne* did, out of a much less
‘ civil list) 100,000 *l. per annum*, for the support
‘ of the present war. Thus every loyal heart,
‘ unbrib’d, unpensioned, would be zealous in his
‘ Majesty’s service; and his throne would be
‘ strengthened (if possible, more than it is at pre-
‘ sent) upon that only true basis of royal power,
‘ the affections of his people.

‘ I have ever been, my Lords, and I hope I
‘ ever shall be, an enemy to corruption; but of
‘ all the variety of corrupted, surely pensioners, if
‘ there ever are any such in an house of Commons,
‘ are the lowest sect. They have no title, no
‘ pretence, to the salary they receive. All their
‘ merit

‘ merit is their vote; and even that is a disgrace
 ‘ when the freedom of it is lost. They neither
 ‘ serve their country, nor truly serve their King.
 ‘ They are the humble servants to a minister,
 ‘ whose orders they obsequiously obey, whatever
 ‘ be his conduct with regard to his Master’s inter-
 ‘ est. Placemen may be honest, but pensioners in
 ‘ the house of Commons never can. They violate
 ‘ the laws of their country, when they are first
 ‘ hired; and when they enter upon their pay,
 ‘ they commence enemies to the publick. Those
 ‘ who are brib’d, my Lords, are far less guilty
 ‘ than such pensioners. Some author I have read,
 ‘ makes this distinction between a pension and a
 ‘ bribe: A bribe, he says, is given for a particular
 ‘ jobb, a pension is a constant, continual bribe.
 ‘ The jobbers are only a sort of day-labourers;
 ‘ but pensioners are domestick servants, hired to
 ‘ go through all the dirty business of the house.
 ‘ As they receive a minister’s wages, I wish they
 ‘ had also worn his livery; and thus the discovery
 ‘ of them had been easily made, without perplex-
 ‘ ing your Lordships with this bill. The *Jews* of
 ‘ *Rome*, my Lords, because it is apprehended, so
 ‘ great a number of them may some time endanger
 ‘ the state, as a mark of their religion, are obliged
 ‘ to wear a piece of yellow linen upon their hats.
 ‘ I wish, my Lords, we had some such institution
 ‘ for the unlawful pensioners; for, as many of
 ‘ the *Jews* chuse rather to quit the city, than bear
 ‘ about this mark of infamy, so I flatter myself,
 ‘ we should have got rid of a considerable number
 ‘ of our pensioners, as soon as their virtuous cha-
 ‘ racters were known by their yellow caps.

‘ I am sure, my Lords, I need trouble your
 ‘ Lordships no more to prove the dangerous con-
 ‘ sequences that may accrue to the publick, from
 ‘ the violation of our laws, against these hirelings.
 ‘ Whether this bill will be effectual, whether it
 ‘ will

‘ will entirely stop this channel of corruption, I’ll
‘ not pretend to say; but something must be done:
‘ Let us not refuse a good thing, because it is not
‘ the best; or be averse to remedying part of the
‘ evil, because we cannot get rid of the whole.
‘ The freedom of Parliament has never been lost,
‘ or recovered, but by degrees; and, if your
‘ Lordships have a mind to amend and strengthen
‘ this bill, let it be referred to a committee ap-
‘ pointed for that purpose. Any thing, my Lords,
‘ rather than reject the bill with contempt, as if
‘ the independency of Parliament were a point not
‘ worthy this assembly’s consideration. My
‘ Lords, it is most particularly our care; and
‘ though some paltry venal writers of these days,
‘ have endeavoured to palliate and justify the guilt
‘ of corruption, nay, even to prove it necessary
‘ for the carrying on of government, yet, I am
‘ persuaded, that systems so inconsistent with our
‘ constitution, have ever been abhorred by your
‘ Lordships.

‘ However publick virtue hath been derided:
‘ However the honest support of our country’s
‘ cause has been misconstrued resentment, spleen,
‘ malice, and disaffection, yet patriotism is a vir-
‘ tue that, I hope, will always recommend itself
‘ to Parliaments, since Parliaments can only subsist
‘ by it. To give the world a proof that such vir-
‘ tue is still amongst us, let us give our concur-
‘ rence to this bill; and thus shall we put it out
‘ of the power of future malice to say, that the
‘ invidious task of throwing out this bill was,
‘ with success, laid upon us, and that we submit-
‘ ted ourselves to the unpopular burden, too heavy
‘ for the Commons.’

The

The next that spoke was the Lord *Hinton*, whose speech was in substance thus :

‘ My Lords,
 ‘ However unpopular, however invidious it
 ‘ may appear, to oppose this bill, yet, I think
 ‘ myself in duty obliged to take the task upon
 ‘ me; because, I think it a most unnecessary inno-
 ‘ vation of our constitution; and an innovation
 ‘ that will certainly be of the most fatal conse-
 ‘ quence to the morals of the people. It has often
 ‘ been the fate of this house, my Lords, to with-
 ‘ stand unreasonable prejudices that have been art-
 ‘ fully raised among the people; and the more
 ‘ general or violent such prejudices may grow, the
 ‘ more zealous ought we to be for preventing the
 ‘ dangerous effects they may produce, either in
 ‘ the nation or upon our happy constitution. For
 ‘ this reason, so far from yielding to any popular
 ‘ outcry on account of its being general, I shall
 ‘ always be for examining coolly into its founda-
 ‘ tion, and where I can find no solid foundation,
 ‘ I shall never be for rearing a new fabrick, or
 ‘ any addition to the old.

Lord *Hinton*'s
 speech.

‘ I know, my Lords, a great outcry has of late
 ‘ been most artfully raised against corruption; and,
 ‘ I believe, there are many well-meaning men
 ‘ who think there is some ground for it; because
 ‘ it is natural for mankind to indulge their own
 ‘ vanity and self-conceit, by imagining that those
 ‘ who differ from them, especially in politicks,
 ‘ are governed by any other motive rather than
 ‘ that of reason; and as corruption is the most
 ‘ obvious motive that can be imputed to those
 ‘ that approve of the measures of a court, there-
 ‘ fore those that disapprove, of course suppose,
 ‘ that most of their antagonists are influenced by
 ‘ corruption. But this to me is no proof, nor so
 ‘ much as a presumption. It is from court mea-

‘ fures alone that I am to judge; and if thofe
‘ meafures have been fuch as I thought reasonable,
‘ I cannot fuppofe, charity will not allow me to
‘ fuppofe, that any gentleman in either houfe of
‘ Parliament was, from corrupt motives, induced
‘ to approve of them.

‘ This, my Lords, is my way of judging: I
‘ hope it will be allowed to be a reasonable way
‘ of judging; and if it is, I am fure it muft be
‘ allowed by a great majority of this houfe, that
‘ there is at prefent no folid ground for the outcry
‘ that has been lately raifed againft corruption. I
‘ fhall agree with the noble Lords who appear fo
‘ zealous for this bill, that our conftitution may
‘ hereafter, and by fome changes in the fituation
‘ of our affairs, come to be in danger from cor-
‘ ruption; but, if we were to think of providing
‘ againft every poffible or diftant danger that
‘ might be fuggested by a gloomy and fertile ima-
‘ gination, we fhould never be a moment at reft,
‘ nor our conftitution a twelve-month the fame.
‘ The noble Lord who fpoke laft has allowed,
‘ that the liberties of a country were never loft,
‘ but by degrees; therefore he muft allow, that
‘ our liberties cannot at once be fwallowed up by
‘ corruption. It muft come upon us by degrees;
‘ and of all dangers to which our conftitution can
‘ be expofed, that of corruption muft make the
‘ moft flow and gradual approaches. We have
‘ already many fences againft it, fences which, in
‘ our prefent fituation, I think infurmountable;
‘ but, if I fhould hereafter find myfelf miftaken,
‘ I fhall be as ready as any Lord in this houfe to
‘ add new fences, and to repair the old, in as
‘ ftrong and effectual a manner as poffible. This
‘ we fhall have fufficient time to do, becaufe we
‘ cannot but perceive the approach of fo danger-
‘ ous an enemy, by the effect it muft have upon
‘ one or other houfe of Parliament; for if we
‘ fhould

‘ should find the Parliament approving of publick
 ‘ measures that are in themselves either weak or
 ‘ wicked, we must then suppose, that corruption
 ‘ has begun to break through our former fences,
 ‘ and then, indeed, it will be time to think of
 ‘ providing some new defence.

‘ The present bill, therefore, can appear neces-
 ‘ sary to none but those who think, that the Par-
 ‘ liament has of late approved of some weak or
 ‘ wicked measures of government; and as I am
 ‘ far from thinking so, I cannot agree to the com-
 ‘ mitting or passing of this bill, especially as I am
 ‘ of opinion, that it would have a most fatal effect
 ‘ upon the morals of the people. I believe, it will
 ‘ be allowed, that there is nothing of more dan-
 ‘ gerous consequence to the happiness of society,
 ‘ than a general contempt of perjury among the
 ‘ lower sort of people; and we know how ready
 ‘ the lower sort are to follow those examples that
 ‘ are, or which they suppose to be set them by
 ‘ those of superior rank. I am far from supposing,
 ‘ that any gentleman of the other house has a se-
 ‘ cret pension from the crown, and far less shall I
 ‘ suppose, that if any one of them had, he would
 ‘ solemnly declare upon oath, he had no such
 ‘ thing; but, my Lords, it is impossible for
 ‘ any gentleman to guard absolutely against the
 ‘ reproach of malicious tongues, or to prevent
 ‘ that reproach being believed by a great many.
 ‘ There are now, there will always be some gen-
 ‘ tlemen in the other house, reproached with hav-
 ‘ ing private pensions from the crown; and this
 ‘ reproach will always be believed by many with-
 ‘ out doors. If this bill should pass into a law,
 ‘ every gentleman so suspected must swear, that
 ‘ he has no such pension. Would his swearing so
 ‘ remove the reproach? No, my Lords, it would
 ‘ add to it a new reproach of a much more hei-
 ‘ nous nature; for many without doors would be-
 ‘ lieve,

‘ lieve, he swore falsely; and many of the meaner
‘ sort, being confirmed in this belief, would, from
‘ the example supposed to be set them by a gen-
‘ tleman of such rank and figure in his country,
‘ begin to lose that veneration every man ought
‘ to have for an oath; by which means perjury
‘ might at last become contemptible among the
‘ vulgar; and this would of course lay open the
‘ floodgates of all other sorts of wickedness.

‘ From this consideration, my Lords, if our li-
‘ berties were now in danger from corruption, if
‘ some new remedy were necessary for putting a
‘ stop to that evil, I should nevertheless be against
‘ this bill; because the remedy would bring on a
‘ greater evil than that which it is intended to
‘ cure. But as, I think, we are at present, what-
‘ ever may be pretended, in no more danger from
‘ pensioners in either house of Parliament, than
‘ we are from the *Jews* in the city of *London*, I
‘ think it as unnecessary to provide any new re-
‘ medy against the former, as it would be to put
‘ yellow caps upon the latter; and I believe, the
‘ noble Lord himself does not think it is necessary,
‘ or that it would be proper, to put any mark of
‘ distinction upon the *Jews* that reside in this
‘ kingdom: Nay, I believe, he will grant, that
‘ the danger apprehended at *Rome*, which was
‘ the occasion of putting a mark of distinction up-
‘ on them there, was rather imaginary than real;
‘ and that it was suggested by that selfish, narrow,
‘ persecuting spirit, which clapt tails to the *Here-*
‘ *ticks* in *Spain*.

‘ But why, my Lords, should we give so much
‘ attention to this outcry against corruption, and
‘ yet wholly disregard that outcry against resent-
‘ ment, malice, envy, disaffection, and sedition,
‘ which prevails among another set of people?
‘ For as no man is willing to suppose, that any
‘ difference from his opinion proceeds from reason,
‘ the

‘ the friends of the administration are as apt to
 ‘ impute the opposition to these motives, as the
 ‘ opposers are apt to impute an approbation of the
 ‘ government’s measures to corruption. For my
 ‘ own part, I am so charitable as to believe, that
 ‘ both sides are governed by their reason; and
 ‘ therefore, if it should be thought necessary to
 ‘ oblige the members of the other house to swear,
 ‘ they had never given their vote in Parliament
 ‘ for any reward or promise whatsoever, I should
 ‘ think it necessary, at the same time, to oblige
 ‘ them to swear, they had never given a vote in
 ‘ Parliament, out of resentment, malice, envy,
 ‘ disaffection, or sedition; for, I think the man,
 ‘ who is under the government of either of these,
 ‘ as far from being a free agent, as he that is un-
 ‘ der the influence of corruption.’

The next that stood up was the Earl of *Carlisle*, whose speech was in substance as follows, *viz.*

‘ My Lords,

Earl of *Car-*
lisle’s speech.

‘ When one considers the nature of this bill, it
 ‘ is really amazing to find it meet with any oppo-
 ‘ sition in this house. It is so far from being an
 ‘ innovation with respect to our constitution, that
 ‘ it can scarcely be said to be a new law; because
 ‘ the sole intention of the bill is, to amend and
 ‘ enforce laws that are already in being, and laws
 ‘ too which were made to obviate and prevent a
 ‘ practice that has often been used, and that has
 ‘ always been acknowledged to be of dangerous
 ‘ consequence to our constitution. To pretend
 ‘ that we are not at present in any danger from
 ‘ the private pensions that may be given to mem-
 ‘ bers of the other house, must appear absurd to
 ‘ every man that considers the nature of ministers,
 ‘ or the nature of mankind. My Lords, it is a
 ‘ danger we can never be free from, nor can ever
 ‘ sufficiently

‘ sufficiently guard against, as long as it is in the
‘ power of a minister to give, or of a member to
‘ receive. It is absolutely necessary for a minister
‘ to have the consent or approbation of Parliament
‘ in almost every step of his conduct; therefore,
‘ from the very nature of ministers we must sup-
‘ pose, that if he cannot obtain such consent or
‘ approbation by his authority, he will endeavour
‘ to obtain it by his power; and from the nature
‘ of mankind we must suppose, that among such
‘ a number of men as are in the other house, the
‘ minister will always find some of them ready
‘ enough to prostitute their consent or approbation
‘ for a considerable bribe or annual pension. Thus
‘ we must always be exposed to this danger, and
‘ we are now a great deal more exposed to it than
‘ ever we were heretofore; because our ministers
‘ now have infinitely more to give, and custom or
‘ example has, I’m afraid, greatly added to the
‘ number of those that are ready to receive.

‘ This, my Lords, the gentlemen of the other
‘ house are fully sensible of, and therefore they
‘ have endeavoured, by this bill, to add to the
‘ strength of those laws, which were made for
‘ guarding against a danger, that has greatly in-
‘ creased since the last of them was enacted. By
‘ this bill there is no alteration made in our laws
‘ or constitution: There is no man excluded from
‘ having a seat in the other house, but those who,
‘ while they sit there, are guilty of a continued
‘ breach of the laws of their country, and would
‘ certainly be not only expelled but prosecuted, if
‘ their crime could be discovered and proved. By
‘ the very act of settlement itself, my Lords, it
‘ was expressly enacted, amongst other things,
‘ That no person having a pension from the crown,
‘ should serve as member of the house of Com-
‘ mons; and though this clause was in general re-
‘ pealed, by an act of the 4th and 5th of Queen

‘ *Anne*, yet it was then again thought so reason-
‘ ble to exclude pensioners from having seats in
‘ the other house, that it was of-new enacted,
‘ That no person having any pension from the
‘ crown during pleasure, should be capable of be-
‘ ing a member of any future house of Commons;
‘ and by an act of the first of the late King, this
‘ incapacity was farther extended to all persons
‘ having any pension from the crown, for any
‘ term or number of years, either in their own
‘ names, or in the name of any other person in
‘ trust for them, or for their benefit. Thus your
‘ Lordships see, that by the laws now in being all
‘ persons who have pensions from the crown du-
‘ ring pleasure, or for any term or number of years,
‘ are rendered incapable of having seats in the
‘ other house; and by these laws great penalties
‘ are inflicted upon those, who presume to break
‘ through them. But as no provision has been
‘ made by either of these laws for discovering se-
‘ cret offenders, and as every man must be sensible
‘ that such pensions may be given privately, the
‘ gentlemen of the other house have thought it
‘ necessary, and, I hope, your Lordships will think
‘ it necessary, to provide the best remedy that can
‘ be thought of for this defect, which is the chief,
‘ and indeed the sole intention of this bill.

‘ I cannot help, therefore, being astonished at
‘ its being pretended, that this bill will occasion
‘ any alteration or innovation in our constitution;
‘ and there is nothing convinces me more of the
‘ necessity there is for passing it, than the circum-
‘ stances of the noble Lords who, I find, oppose
‘ it. To the honour of the administration in the
‘ first year of the late King, I must observe, that
‘ the law past at that time, for excluding pension-
‘ ers from the other house, was introduced by a
‘ secretary of state, and approved by most of those
‘ in the administration; and it was prudent and
‘ right

‘ right in them to do so. A minister that has no
‘ intention to make use of bribery and corruption,
‘ has no occasion to oppose any bill that can be
‘ thought of for preventing such infamous and il-
‘ legal practices; and therefore, when I find such a
‘ bill opposed by those who are the known friends
‘ of a minister, it will always be a prevailing ar-
‘ gument with me, not only to think that there is
‘ a present and pressing necessity for such a bill,
‘ but also to think that the bill proposed will be
‘ in some measure effectual. Whether the bill
‘ now before us will be altogether effectual, is
‘ what I shall not pretend to determine; but I am
‘ convinced, both from the nature of it, and from
‘ the opposition it meets with, that it will have
‘ some effect. It will at least raise the price of
‘ prostitutes, because the more risk a man runs,
‘ the higher wages he will of course expect; and
‘ the higher you raise the price of those who are
‘ liable to be corrupted, the more difficult will
‘ every future minister find it to corrupt; so that
‘ at last you may render the practice impossible,
‘ notwithstanding the many and great boons our
‘ ministers have now to bestow; and then they
‘ must think of gaining the consent or approbation
‘ of Parliament by their authority in persuading,
‘ and not by their power in corrupting.

‘ But suppose it were your Lordships opinion,
‘ that this bill would be altogether ineffectual, can
‘ this be a reason for not committing it? If the
‘ intention of the bill, if the principle upon which
‘ it is founded, be right, the imperfection of it is
‘ no reason against committing it; because in the
‘ committee you may alter and amend it, so as to
‘ remove every imperfection; therefore, I must
‘ think, that the noble Lords who oppose com-
‘ mitting it, disapprove of the principle upon
‘ which it is founded, and, indeed, most of their
‘ arguments seem to tend that way. Such a bill’s

‘ having been rejected by this house in former
‘ sessions, is no reason for our rejecting it in this.
‘ Some of the best laws that were ever made, have
‘ at first met with the unlucky fate of being reject-
‘ ed. The triennial bill was at first rejected by this
‘ house, and yet the very next session it was ap-
‘ proved of and passed by this house; and though
‘ it was at that time rejected by the crown, yet in
‘ the next following session, it met with the ap-
‘ probation of the three several branches of our
‘ legislature, and was accordingly passed into a
‘ law. That law, ’tis true, has been since repeal-
‘ ed, but, nevertheless, it has always been deemed
‘ by a great majority of the nation, to be an ex-
‘ cellent law; and many of those who joined in
‘ the repeal of it, I believe, now heartily repent
‘ of their having done so. But the very repeal of
‘ that law is a strong argument in favour of the
‘ bill now before us; for the longer the term is,
‘ for which the representatives of the people are
‘ chosen, the greater security ought the people to
‘ have, that those representatives shall not, from
‘ any selfish view, betray the interest of their
‘ country in Parliament.

‘ To pretend, my Lords, that we ought never
‘ to think of guarding against pensioners in the
‘ other house, till we find the majority of that
‘ house approving of some weak or wicked mea-
‘ sures of government, is the very same with say-
‘ ing, that no man ought to think of repairing his
‘ house, till it has tumbled down and overwhelm-
‘ ed him in the ruins. Will pensioners ever ac-
‘ knowledge, that they have agreed to any weak
‘ or wicked measure? Will a pensioner ever agree
‘ to give up the only tenure by which he holds
‘ his pension? And if the majority of the other
‘ house should once come to be pensioned and
‘ corrupted, could it be expected, that such a
‘ house of Commons would ever concur in passing
‘ any

‘ any law against pensioning and corrupting? I
‘ can freely declare that, in my opinion, many
‘ things have of late years met with the approba-
‘ tion of both houses of Parliament, that very lit-
‘ tle deserved it. I believe there are very few
‘ Lords in this house, that will now approve of
‘ every thing that has, for these twenty years past,
‘ been approved of by Parliament; and therefore,
‘ if every Lord makes this the standard for his
‘ opinion of this bill, I have no great doubt of its
‘ meeting with the fate it deserves. Whether the
‘ undeserved approbation some late measures have
‘ met with in Parliament, was owing to the num-
‘ ber of pensioners in the other house, I shall not
‘ pretend to determine: I shall not even pretend
‘ to affirm, that there are at present any pensioners
‘ in that house; but when we see members obtain-
‘ ing very great and lucrative posts for their bro-
‘ thers, sons, or distant relations, it cannot but
‘ occasion a suspicion, that they have a fellow-
‘ feeling in the salary or perquisites; and this sus-
‘ picion is a good reason for passing this bill. But
‘ suppose there were no such suspicion: Suppose
‘ we were absolutely certain that there are at pre-
‘ sent no pensioners in the house of Commons,
‘ there is a possibility, nay, a very great probabili-
‘ ty, that there will be such, as soon as we have
‘ the misfortune to fall under the government of
‘ a Prince, or administration of a minister, whose
‘ projects or schemes cannot be supported by rea-
‘ son; for every one must see, that the laws in
‘ being are not sufficient for guarding against the
‘ mischief.

‘ By the laws now in being, my Lords, it is
‘ made criminal for any man that accepts of a
‘ pension to keep his seat in the other house; but
‘ those laws have provided no method for disco-
‘ vering and proving that crime; and as a pension
‘ may be given, as infamous pensions are generally

‘ given, without allowing any person to be privy
 ‘ to it but the corruptor and the corrupted, if you
 ‘ have a mind to prevent the practice as far as lies
 ‘ in your power, you must put it to the oath of
 ‘ one of the parties, which is the design of this
 ‘ bill. I shall not say, that this method will be
 ‘ in every case effectual: I shall admit, that some
 ‘ pensioners may be abandoned enough to add
 ‘ perjury to their treachery, and to declare upon
 ‘ oath, they have no pension, in that very assem-
 ‘ bly where they earn their infamous wages, and
 ‘ perhaps in the very face of him, who pays them.
 ‘ But what is proposed by this bill is, my Lords,
 ‘ the utmost you can do: It will be a sort of test
 ‘ act upon pensioners; and surely those who are so
 ‘ solicitous about keeping the Dissenters in subjec-
 ‘ tion to a test act, cannot refuse to subject those
 ‘ who are suspected of being pensioners, to the
 ‘ same method of purgation.

‘ The test act against the Dissenters, my Lords,
 ‘ was never yet thought sufficient for preventing
 ‘ occasional conformity; and yet, no true lover of
 ‘ the church ever thought it ought, for that rea-
 ‘ son, to be repealed. The test designed by this
 ‘ bill against pensioners, may not, perhaps, be
 ‘ sufficient for keeping all of them out of the
 ‘ house of Commons; yet, no true lover of our
 ‘ constitution can, for that single reason, think, it
 ‘ ought not to be imposed. It will have some
 ‘ effect: I believe it will have a very great effect;
 ‘ because of the danger a man must, in this case,
 ‘ run, by taking a false oath. The revenue of a
 ‘ gentleman, who is no trader or gamester, is ge-
 ‘ nerally pretty well known; and his yearly ex-
 ‘ pence may be pretty nearly guessed at by his
 ‘ neighbours and servants. This, upon a strict
 ‘ enquiry, will always afford a strong presumption
 ‘ against him; and, as the person that pays him
 ‘ his pension, may afterwards turn evidence against
 ‘ him,

‘ him, he can never be absolutely secure against a
‘ conviction, which will, I believe, terrify most
‘ men from being guilty of the crime.

‘ I find some Lords are, upon this occasion,
‘ extremely apprehensive of corrupting the morals
‘ of the people, by a multiplicity of new oaths: I
‘ wish the same apprehensions had prevailed, when
‘ such an infinite number of oaths were contrived,
‘ for collecting our customs and excises. Most of
‘ those oaths are to be taken by multitudes of
‘ people, and in cases where there are great temp-
‘ tations for perjury: The oath now proposed, is
‘ to be taken by none but members of the other
‘ house, and the temptations to perjury can never
‘ be great or frequent, but when our constitution
‘ is in the utmost danger. It is therefore some-
‘ thing strange, that we should be so little appre-
‘ hensive of corrupting the morals of the people
‘ by a multiplicity of oaths, when we are contri-
‘ ving methods for preserving the revenue of our
‘ Sovereign, and so very apprehensive of the like
‘ effect, when we are contriving methods for
‘ preserving the constitution and liberties of our
‘ country. A foreigner, upon considering this
‘ behaviour, would be apt to judge, we had very
‘ little concern about the latter, provided we could
‘ but enjoy a share of the former; and, if we
‘ should reject this bill, without much better rea-
‘ sons than I have yet heard against it, I fear,
‘ most of our own people will join in forming so
‘ false an opinion of this honourable and august
‘ assembly.

‘ Your Lordships must be all sensible, how
‘ prevalent the jealousy is at present, of there be-
‘ ing a great number of pensioners in Parliament:
‘ The gentlemen of the other house have endea-
‘ voured to allay that jealousy, and to vindicate
‘ the honour of their assembly, by sending us up
‘ this bill. If it should be thrown out here, what

‘ will the nation think? Will it not be generally
‘ supposed, that it is in this house where the
‘ number of pensioners prevails, and that here the
‘ pensions have their most infallible effect? Or,
‘ perhaps it will be supposed, that there are pen-
‘ sioners in the other house as well as in this, but
‘ that the pensioners in the other, for the sake of
‘ recommending themselves to their constituents,
‘ had leave from their masters to agree to this bill,
‘ because those masters knew, they could depend
‘ upon the number and submission of their pen-
‘ sioners in this, for throwing it out. I am very
‘ sensible, my Lords, there is no real ground for
‘ either of these suppositions; but those without
‘ doors, who do not know the reasons upon which
‘ your Lordships proceed, when they find a bill
‘ rejected which makes no alteration in our consti-
‘ tution, which does not so much as make an al-
‘ teration in any former law, which contains no-
‘ thing but an enforcement of the laws in being
‘ against pensioners; such persons, I say, may
‘ think, they have reason to make one or other of
‘ these suppositions; and should not we be ex-
‘ tremely cautious of giving the least shadow of
‘ reason for judging so unworthily of our assembly?

‘ I do not know, but that some of your Lord-
‘ ships may be of opinion, that the laws now in
‘ being, for excluding pensioners from the other
‘ house, are inconvenient, and therefore wish they
‘ were repealed: If they are so, let them be re-
‘ pealed; for we ought not to sit here, and suffer
‘ any laws to remain in force, that are inconveni-
‘ ent to the society. But, if they are not incon-
‘ venient: If they are necessary for guarding our
‘ constitution against corruption, the most danger-
‘ ous, because it is the most secret enemy to a free
‘ state, they ought to be enforced, they ought to
‘ be rendered effectual, by all the methods that
‘ can by the wit of man be invented, or by human
‘ power

‘ power exercised. In cases of such a secret nature
‘ we must, we ought to call the Divine Power to
‘ our assistance, by interposing the religious solem-
‘ nity of an oath. By interposing an oath, my
‘ Lords, in matters of great consequence, and
‘ which cannot frequently occur, we shall never
‘ render the solemnity familiar and contemptible;
‘ and where is there a matter of greater conse-
‘ quence, on this side the grave, than the prefer-
‘ vation of the constitution of our government,
‘ and liberties of our country? It is by interposing
‘ an oath in trival matters, in such as frequently
‘ occur and chiefly affect the meaner sort, that we
‘ render the solemnity familiar and contemptible
‘ to the vulgar; and, I wish the invention of some
‘ of those who are supposed to be no friends to
‘ this bill, had, in this respect, been less fruitful.

‘ My Lords, as the laws now in being, for ex-
‘ cluding pensioners from the other house, must,
‘ to every man that considers them, appear to be
‘ altogether ineffectual, if this bill be rejected, I
‘ shall, even in my time, if I live but a very few
‘ years, expect to see the other house full of pen-
‘ sioners. I shall expect to see a minister in that
‘ house, out of a wantonness of power, by his sole
‘ ——No——throw out a bill of the utmost im-
‘ portance, without deigning to give his slaves so
‘ much as one reason for what he obliges them to
‘ do. This, indeed, if it should ever happen, I
‘ shall look upon as a sign of his power, but not
‘ of his prudence; and, I may prophesy, that if
‘ ever a minister should get such a power over the
‘ other house, his power in this will be as absolute,
‘ and equally insolent.’

Upon this noble Lord’s sitting down, the Earl
of *Cholmondeley* stood up, and spoke to this effect,
viz.

‘ My

Earl of Chol-
mondeley's
speech.

My Lords,

I shall always be as ready as any Lord in this house, to enforce the laws now in being, for excluding pensioners from having seats in the house of Commons: I shall readily concur in any method that may be proposed for that purpose, provided it be such a one as I think consistent with our constitution; but when the method proposed, evidently tends to the overthrow of that constitution, which we all shew, and I hope sincerely, so warm a zeal for preserving, I hope I shall always have virtue and resolution enough, to give it my negative, let the consequence be what it will. If the laws now in force, for terrifying a pensioner from keeping his seat in the other house, are not sufficient, I hope some method will be found out, for rendering them so, without giving such a power to the other house, as must soon overturn our constitution, which, I think, would be the certain effect of the bill now before us; for it would shew very great imprudence, as well as great ignorance of our constitution, if we should expose ourselves to a new danger, for the sake of avoiding a danger of a different nature, which we are already pretty well, if not effectually, guarded against.

By the law of the fourth and fifth of Queen Anne, my Lords, mentioned by the noble Lord who spoke last, it is enacted, That if any person having a pension from the crown during pleasure, shall sit or vote in the other house, he shall forfeit 500*l.* to such as shall sue for the same. And by the act of the first of his late Majesty, likewise mentioned by the same noble Lord, it is enacted, That if any person having a pension from the crown, for any term or number of years, either in his own name, or in the name
of

‘ of any other person in trust for him, or for his
‘ benefit, shall presume to sit or vote in the other
‘ house, he shall, in such case, forfeit 20*l.* for
‘ every day in which he shall so sit or vote there,
‘ to him who shall sue for the same.

‘ These penalties are so high, that in my opi-
‘ nion, my Lords, no gentleman of fortune will
‘ run the risk of incurring them, for the sake of
‘ any pension the crown can bestow; and we
‘ know, that none but gentlemen of fortune can
‘ be chosen members of the other house. For
‘ this reason, notwithstanding the suspicions that
‘ prevail, and are most industriously propagated,
‘ without doors, I cannot think, that there are at
‘ present any pensioners in the other house; and,
‘ indeed, from the very nature of things, I am
‘ convinced of it. No Prince, no minister, will
‘ ever give a pension, for the sake of engaging a
‘ man’s vote in Parliament, unless there be an
‘ absolute necessity for so doing; and whilst a
‘ Prince, or minister, desires nothing of Parlia-
‘ ment, but what is reasonable, and agreeable to
‘ the publick interest, there can be no such ne-
‘ cessity; for however much some men may be
‘ actuated by malice or disaffection, as long as the
‘ administration pursues no measures, but such as
‘ are necessary for securing the happiness of their
‘ country, I hope they will always find a majority
‘ in both houses of Parliament, ready to approve
‘ of such measures, without any pension or re-
‘ ward. This has, in my opinion, been the case,
‘ I shall venture to say, ever since the accession of
‘ our present Royal Family: Our ministers may,
‘ perhaps, have thought of some measures that
‘ were disagreeable; but as soon as they found
‘ they were so, they have always given them up:
‘ And some things have, perhaps, afterwards ap-
‘ peared not to have been so right; but at the
‘ time they were resolved on, they appeared other-
‘ wise;

‘ wise; and our Parliaments will, I hope, be al-
 ‘ ways ready to forgive human frailty, in all cases
 ‘ where no neglect or oversight can be imputed
 ‘ to the authors or actors.

‘ This, my Lords, is my opinion of our late
 ‘ conduct, and therefore I cannot suppose, that
 ‘ there are at present any pensioners in the other
 ‘ house, or any pensioner in the nation, but such
 ‘ as are entitled to it out of charity, or such as
 ‘ have merited it by their past services to the
 ‘ publick. I shall admit, that a prudent man will
 ‘ take care to repair his house before it tumbles
 ‘ about his ears; but no prudent man will put
 ‘ himself to the trouble and expence of repairing
 ‘ his house, when no flaw or defect appears in any
 ‘ part of it; and if it should ever appear from ex-
 ‘ perience, that our laws for excluding pensioners
 ‘ from the other house, are in any respect deficient,
 ‘ I hope those who have a regard for the liberties
 ‘ of their country, will take the alarm, time e-
 ‘ nough to get that defect remedied, before the
 ‘ most artful minister can secure such an abandon-
 ‘ ed majority of pensioners in the other house, as
 ‘ to render the cure impossible; for it is an old
 ‘ maxim, *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*, and this
 ‘ maxim may be applied to an assembly, with as
 ‘ much, if not more justice, than to any single
 ‘ man.

‘ But suppose, my Lords, I were convinced,
 ‘ that these laws had by late experience been found
 ‘ deficient, I should nevertheless be against the
 ‘ method proposed by this bill for removing that
 ‘ defect; because, I think the remedy more dan-
 ‘ gerous than the disease. Our constitution, my
 ‘ Lords, and the happiness of it, consists in an
 ‘ equal mixture of the three principal forms of
 ‘ government; and therefore, no new regulation
 ‘ ought to be made, that visibly tends to destroy
 ‘ that equality, or that balance, upon which our
 ‘ constitution

‘ constitution depends. We have as much reason
‘ to avoid every thing that may tend to the in-
‘ troducing of a republican form of government,
‘ which generally ends in an absolute tyranny, as
‘ we have to avoid those things that may tend to
‘ the introducing of an absolute monarchy. In all
‘ such cases, we should consider, that we are steer-
‘ ing between *Scylla* and *Charybdis*; and that by
‘ too cautiously avoiding the one, we may make a
‘ wreck of our constitution upon the other. For
‘ this reason, we ought of all things to be cautious
‘ of vesting any new and distinct powers in the
‘ other house; and as this bill vests in them a new
‘ power, which they are to exercise separately and
‘ distinctly by themselves, and without the con-
‘ currence of either of the other two branches of
‘ our legislature, I think it would expose us to
‘ the danger of falling under a republican form of
‘ government, and consequently, an absolute ty-
‘ ranny, a great deal more than we are at present
‘ exposed to the danger of falling under an abso-
‘ lute monarchy.

‘ I know, my Lords, that great endeavours
‘ have of late been used, to persuade the people,
‘ that there is a great number of pensioners in the
‘ other house; and as those of an inferior rank
‘ are naturally suspicious, as well as envious of
‘ their superiors, these endeavours have, I believe,
‘ succeeded with a great many, so as to make
‘ them fond of this bill. As their penetration is
‘ not generally very extensive, they do not see
‘ the fatal consequences it is attended with; and
‘ therefore, they suppose, that none but those
‘ who pay or receive pensions, can be against it.
‘ I am, therefore, sensible, I undertake a very
‘ unpopular task, when I oppose this bill; but I
‘ disdain a slavish popularity, as much as I should
‘ disdain a slavish submission to the pleasure of any
‘ Prince or minister. The favour of the people
‘ may,

‘ may, I know, be acquired by humouring their
 ‘ prejudices, as well as that of a Prince by hu-
 ‘ mouring his passions; but this sort of favour is,
 ‘ in neither case, of any long duration. The
 ‘ people by their prejudices, as well as the Prince
 ‘ by his passions, generally soon lead themselves
 ‘ into some misfortune; and as soon as this hap-
 ‘ pens, the parasite, in both cases, becomes hate-
 ‘ ful and contemptible.

‘ For this reason, my Lords, we ought, in no
 ‘ case that comes before us, to give ourselves any
 ‘ concern about what the people may think with-
 ‘ out doors. We ought to consider only the
 ‘ circumstances of the case, as they appear to us;
 ‘ and when we do this deliberately, and resolve
 ‘ accordingly, the people without doors, as soon
 ‘ as they have had time to hear and consider our
 ‘ reasons, will generally approve of our resolu-
 ‘ tions; and will then begin to hate and despise
 ‘ those, who endeavoured to prepossess them with
 ‘ a bad opinion of either house of Parliament.’

The next that rose up was the Duke of *Argyle*,
 whose speech was in substance thus:

‘ My Lords,

Duke of
Argyle's
 speech.

‘ We are now upon a bill for putting an end
 ‘ to, or at least preventing one sort of corruption
 ‘ in the other house; and from the opposition the
 ‘ bill meets with here, and the imaginary dangers
 ‘ that are suggested for supporting, or rather ex-
 ‘ cusing that opposition, those who are not per-
 ‘ sonally acquainted with the noble Lords, who
 ‘ have spoke upon that side of the question,
 ‘ would, I think, be apt to suppose their opinion
 ‘ to be, either that corruption is now become a
 ‘ necessary evil, without which the forms of our
 ‘ government could not be preserved, or that it is
 ‘ an evil of very little consequence, and not at all
 ‘ inconsistent

‘ inconsistent with the substance of a free govern-
‘ ment. Corruption, my Lords, has always hi-
‘ therto been allowed to be vile, to be dangerous.
‘ I have, for my own part, discouraged it in all
‘ stations: I shall always disdain the obedience, or
‘ the parasitical sort of assent that is to be gained
‘ only by corruption; and I have always been
‘ sorry, when I observed it was not equally dis-
‘ couraged by others; for if it were no way en-
‘ couraged by those in high stations, it would
‘ never be possible for the mode in any country to
‘ cover that infamy, which naturally attends the
‘ corrupted; nor would the quality of the offender
‘ ever atone for the wretched meanness of the
‘ offence.

‘ I need not trouble your Lordships with ex-
‘ plaining what is, in this country, meant by a
‘ legal administration: Every one knows what it
‘ is; and every one knows, that it may be easily
‘ supported without corruption. Ministers, my
‘ Lords, (for according to our constitution, we
‘ ought always to have a great many of them)
‘ that have nothing in view, but the publick hap-
‘ piness, and who have wisdom and discernment
‘ enough to pursue that steadily, may despise the
‘ assistance or approbation of those, who assist or
‘ approve, only because they are paid for so doing.
‘ Such an administration will always have the ma-
‘ jority of the nation of its side, and consequently
‘ may, without any corrupt means, have always a
‘ majority in Parliament. Therefore, a legal and
‘ a wise administration can never stand in need of
‘ corruption, for the exercise of any of its func-
‘ tions; but an illegal one, an administration con-
‘ sisting of one sole and arrogant minister, who
‘ will admit of no partner or assistant, but such as
‘ implicitly submit to his direction, can never be
‘ supported without corruption: It is against law,
‘ and against law it must be supported. Under
‘ such

‘ such an administration, indeed, the forms of our
 ‘ government cannot be preserved, without eva-
 ‘ ding or violating our laws against corrupt practi-
 ‘ ces; but under such an administration, while it
 ‘ lasts, the substance of our constitution must be
 ‘ suspended, and we had better be without the
 ‘ forms; for preserving the forms of a free go-
 ‘ vernment will only serve to lull and keep the
 ‘ people asleep, till their chains are rivetted, and
 ‘ till one sole minister has so firmly established his
 ‘ power, that it may be easily transmitted to, or
 ‘ taken up by another. Many of our Princes,
 ‘ and their sole ministers, have in vain endeavour-
 ‘ ed to establish an arbitrary government, without
 ‘ the assistance or shew of a Parliament: They
 ‘ have endeavoured to do it by open force, and
 ‘ by open force they have been all disappointed,
 ‘ and the ministers often hanged; but by the slow
 ‘ and silent approaches of corruption, especially
 ‘ now the crown has got such a variety of means
 ‘ in its power, an arbitrary government, more
 ‘ destructive and more expensive than the other,
 ‘ may be established by the authority, and sup-
 ‘ ported by the shadow of a Parliament; for if a
 ‘ Prince, or his sole minister, should ever have it
 ‘ in his power to have always a corrupt majority
 ‘ in each house of Parliament, a *British* Parliament
 ‘ will be no more than a *Turkish* Divan.

‘ Corruption is therefore, my Lords, of all
 ‘ dangers, the greatest our constitution can be ex-
 ‘ posed to, and the most to be apprehended. Its
 ‘ approach is imperceptible, but its blow, if not
 ‘ prevented, is fatal; and you cannot prevent its
 ‘ blow, unless you prevent its approach. The
 ‘ laws now in being for excluding pensioners from
 ‘ having seats in the other house, were designed
 ‘ as a safe-guard against corruption’s entering, in
 ‘ one shape at least, within the walls of that house;
 ‘ and when we are considering, whether those
 ‘ laws

‘ laws ought to be enforced, we have no occasion
‘ for examining into late measures, or for suppo-
‘ sing that any late practices have been made use
‘ of for corrupting the members of either house.
‘ We have now as much reason to guard against
‘ the approach of corruption, as we had when
‘ those laws were made; therefore, we are now
‘ to consider only the laws themselves, and if
‘ they appear to be insufficient, they ought to be
‘ amended, whether any corrupt practices have
‘ lately been made use of or not. That these laws
‘ are insufficient for the end intended, must, I
‘ think, plainly appear to every one that peruses
‘ them. There are penalties, ’tis true, inflicted
‘ upon pensioners that shall presume to sit or vote
‘ in the other house; but it is evident that those
‘ penalties can never be recovered, because the
‘ fact can never be proved. A pension or a bribe
‘ may be given in such a manner, that even he
‘ who gives it, can be no direct witness against
‘ the receiver; and it is always given in such a
‘ secret manner, that the criminal may have good
‘ reason to think, his crime can never be discover-
‘ ed. For this reason, no penalty you can inflict,
‘ will ever have a great effect; and this makes it
‘ necessary, in cases of suspicion, to require an
‘ oath from the party suspected.

‘ I shall not say, my Lords, that the oath re-
‘ quired by this bill will have all the effect that
‘ could be wished. There may be some so aban-
‘ doned, as to despise the religious ceremony of
‘ an oath; but it will have an effect upon a great
‘ many; and even the most abandoned will be shy
‘ of denying their having a pension upon oath, in
‘ the very face, perhaps, of the man who pays
‘ them their pension. Nay, even prudence itself
‘ will make men shy of being guilty of perjury,
‘ lest the concealment of their crime should after-
‘ wards be imputed to them as a favour, and made

‘ use of as a handle for obliging them to do as
‘ much dirty work afterwards without a pension,
‘ as they had done before for the sake of a pension.
‘ It is an old and a true proverb, that when I trust
‘ a man with my secret, I make him my master:
‘ An avaritious, or an extravagant necessitous man
‘ may accept of iniquitous wages from a minister,
‘ and yet he would not, perhaps, chuse to be such
‘ an absolute slave to that minister, as he must be,
‘ should he put it in his power to convict him of
‘ perjury. Therefore, the oath prescribed by this
‘ bill, will certainly have a very great effect; and
‘ as the laws proposed to be enforced by this bill,
‘ evidently appear to be insufficient, this method
‘ of enforcing them ought to be chosen, at least
‘ till a more effectual one can be thought on.

‘ What the noble Lords mean by present dan-
‘ ger, when they say we are in no present danger
‘ from corruption, I cannot comprehend. My
‘ Lords, it is an evil we always have been, and
‘ always must be in danger of. It has often been
‘ practised, it always will be practised, as often as
‘ ambition in a Prince, or wickedness or weakness
‘ in a minister, renders it necessary for him to have
‘ recourse to such an infamous practice. We may
‘ sometimes be said to be in no present danger of
‘ an invasion, yet would he not be look’d on as a
‘ madman, who should make that an argument
‘ for not repairing our navy, especially if, upon
‘ inquiry, it should appear to be unfit for service?

‘ Without finding fault with any late measures,
‘ without accusing any one in the administration,
‘ I will affirm, my Lords, that we are now in
‘ greater danger from corruption, than we were
‘ either in the fourth or fifth of *Queen Anne*, or
‘ in the first of his late Majesty’s reign; for the
‘ more power the ministers of the crown have to
‘ corrupt, whether they make use of that power
‘ or no, the more danger we are in from corrup-
‘ tion;

tion; and every one knows, that the ministers of the crown have now a much greater power to corrupt, than they had at either of those periods. This should make us resolve in time, to take all the methods that can be thought of for guarding against the use of that power; for it is already so great, that if we should have the misfortune to fall under a Prince or administration that will make use of it, I fear, it would then be impossible for us to guard against it. On the contrary, if the means of corruption, now in the power of the crown, should be thought insufficient for securing a perpetual corrupt influence over both houses of Parliament, such an administration would take hold of every grievance, every war, every misfortune, the nation could be exposed to, for encreasing those means, in order to render the effect infallible; and unless a most extraordinary spirit of virtue, as well as jealousy, should begin to exert itself, I'm afraid, it would be impossible, as the laws stand at present, to prevent their success by any legal or peaceable method. For this reason, my Lords, I look upon the present question to be a sort of trial of skill, the fate of which is to determine, whether or no our constitution is hereafter to be destroyed by corruption, and the people reduced to the fatal necessity of endeavouring to restore it by the sword. If this should ever come to be the unlucky fate of this nation, those who now oppose our making use of legal means for preserving our constitution, whilst it is yet in our power, will have no great reason to rejoice in their past conduct.

Let us consider, my Lords, the vast sums of money that are now at the disposal, or under the direction of the crown; the infinite number of lucrative posts, places, and employments, most of them unknown to our ancestors, now depend-

‘ ing upon the sole and arbitrary pleasure of the
‘ crown; and the great variety of penal laws, by
‘ one or other of which the most innocent may
‘ be made to suffer, the most cautious may be en-
‘ trapped, and from which the most guilty may
‘ be screened, by virtue of that dispensing or mi-
‘ tigating power, which, with respect to many of
‘ them, is now lodged in the officers of the
‘ crown: Let us, I say, my Lords, consider these
‘ things, and we must acknowledge, that the pre-
‘ sent danger we are in, of having our Parliament
‘ converted into a *Turkish* Divan, is far from being
‘ imaginary; and when we are under such well-
‘ grounded apprehensions, shall we rack our in-
‘ vention for visionary dangers, in order to excuse
‘ our agreeing to any method for guarding against
‘ a danger so real, and which may, upon the first
‘ change of ministers or measures, become inevi-
‘ table and irresistible?

‘ I must confess, my Lords, I do not know what
‘ the noble Lord means, when he says, the balance
‘ of our constitution will be destroyed by means
‘ of that separate and distinct new power which,
‘ by this bill, is to be lodged in the other house.
‘ I do not know of any power that is by this bill
‘ to be lodged in the other house, but the power
‘ of turning a man out, that ought not, that can-
‘ not, by the laws now in being, sit or vote there;
‘ and this is a separate and distinct power which
‘ that house now enjoys, and which has been al-
‘ ways allowed. This bill can, therefore, make
‘ no alteration in what the noble Lord calls the
‘ balance of our constitution; but if by this bill,
‘ or some such bill, we do not prevent corrupt
‘ and mercenary slaves from entering into that
‘ house, I can foresee where the balance of our
‘ constitution will soon come to be: It will soon
‘ come to be lodged in the pocket of the prime
‘ minister for the time being; and if our liberties
‘ and

‘ and privileges depend upon that balance, they
‘ will then be lodged in the same place, which,
‘ in my opinion, is the worst repository they can
‘ be lodged in.

‘ I therefore hope your Lordships will, by
‘ passing this bill, take care, that no prime mini-
‘ ster shall ever be able to get the balance of our
‘ constitution into his pocket; but I must here
‘ observe, that what is called the balance, and,
‘ indeed, the security of our constitution, consists
‘ not in the power which any of the three
‘ branches of our Legislature has over itself, or
‘ any of its own members, but in no one of
‘ them having a power over either of the other
‘ two. As the three branches of our Legislature
‘ are distinct, they ought to be independent; at
‘ least they ought to have no dependency, but
‘ what proceeds from the publick good, and the
‘ mutual happiness of the three; for if any one of
‘ them should ever, by force or corruption, get
‘ the absolute direction or command of the other
‘ two, our constitution will then be undone, tho’
‘ the forms of it might, perhaps, be preserved,
‘ in order to deceive the vulgar and ignorant.
‘ This is the misfortune intended to be guarded
‘ against by this bill; and it is not of late years
‘ only, that this good intention has been set on
‘ foot. In the end of the late Queen’s reign,
‘ there was just such another bill brought into
‘ this house, which at that time met with so good
‘ a reception here, that it was thrown out but by
‘ one vote; and its meeting with that fate, was
‘ occasioned by the fault of one noble Lord, who,
‘ at the time the question was put, happen’d to be
‘ in the Court of Requests, buying a pen-knife,
‘ with two proxies in his pocket.

‘ I shall acknowledge, my Lords, that I do
‘ not think the bill now before us so perfect as
‘ it ought to be; but all its defects may, I

‘ think, be easily remedied by proper clauses and
‘ amendments in the committee; and if your
‘ Lordships go into a committee upon it, I shall
‘ contribute the little I can towards making it a
‘ perfect bill: I shall probably offer some clauses,
‘ and particularly, I think, it will be necessary to
‘ add one for punishing the corruptor as well as the
‘ corrupted. It is criminal to receive, but much
‘ more criminal to give a bribe, and therefore the
‘ latter ought to be more severely punished: The
‘ very attempt ought to be severely punished; and
‘ this, perhaps, would be as effectual a method as
‘ any, to prevent the committing of the crime;
‘ for if it were made penal to offer, directly or
‘ indirectly, to give or receive a bribe, or corrupt
‘ pension, the practice would become extremely
‘ dangerous, because he that offers cannot be be-
‘ forehand assured, that the other will not, instead
‘ of accepting, become an evidence against him.
‘ In short, my Lords, if the Commons were se-
‘ rious, when they passed and sent us up this bill,
‘ we ought to assist them as much as we can in
‘ purging their assembly, or at least in keeping it
‘ clean, from all corruption. Whether they were
‘ serious or not, is, indeed, what I shall not deter-
‘ mine; for I must confess, I have some suspicions,
‘ when I consider, that this bill was passed una-
‘ nimously in that very assembly, which soon af-
‘ ter disagreed to a motion for bringing in a bill
‘ to exclude placemen from having seats in their
‘ house. There is such an affinity between a
‘ pension and a sine-cure place with a good salary,
‘ depending upon the pleasure of the crown, that
‘ I am not quick-sighted enough to discern the
‘ difference; and therefore, I cannot see the rea-
‘ son, why any member of the other house, that
‘ was seriously resolv’d to exclude pensioners from
‘ that assembly, should disagree to the bringing in
‘ of a bill for excluding at least some sorts of place-
‘ men.

‘ men. But, my Lords, if the other house, or
 ‘ any part of it, was not serious when they passed
 ‘ this bill, I think we should make them so, by
 ‘ sending it back with such additions and amend-
 ‘ ments, as they can find no shadow of reason for
 ‘ disagreeing to. By this means we may get a bill
 ‘ passed into a law, which will be of infinite ser-
 ‘ vice for securing our constitution, and which we
 ‘ could not, perhaps, have got their concurrence
 ‘ in, if the bill had been first modelled and brought
 ‘ in here.’

The next that spoke was the Bishop of *Salisbury*, whose speech was to this effect, *viz.*

‘ My Lords,
 ‘ As this bill, or a bill of the like nature and
 ‘ tendency with this, has been often before us, Bishop of
 ‘ and as often rejected, as it has be brought into *Salisbury's*
 ‘ this house, I have several times had an opportu- *speech.*
 ‘ nity to give my sentiments upon it. I have always
 ‘ given my vote against it, and have before given
 ‘ my reasons for so doing. My opinion is still
 ‘ the same, because my reasons have never, I
 ‘ think, been answer'd; nor has the least care
 ‘ been taken in the forming of this bill, or in its
 ‘ progress through the other house, to obviate any
 ‘ of those objections that have formerly been
 ‘ made against bills of the same nature; therefore
 ‘ I am convinced, that every Lord in this house,
 ‘ remains fixed in his former opinion; and from
 ‘ thence one may judge of the fate this bill
 ‘ may probably meet with here.

‘ I could declaim against corruption, and the
 ‘ dangers we are exposed to from that quarter,
 ‘ tho' not with so much eloquence, yet I hope with
 ‘ as much zeal and sincerity as any Lord in this
 ‘ house; but corruption, my Lords, is not, nor
 ‘ ought it, I think, upon this occasion, to be

‘ the subject of our discourse. It is, I know, a
‘ popular topick : It is a crime which those with-
‘ out doors are always ready, without the least
‘ shadow of reason, to lay to the charge of those
‘ within ; and therefore those without, who
‘ are by far the most numerous, are always de-
‘ lighted, when they hear it inveigh’d against,
‘ without considering whether it be properly
‘ brought into the debate. The bill now before
‘ us has, ’tis true, the resemblance of being a bill
‘ against corruption ; but under that specious
‘ pretence is concealed a most dangerous attempt,
‘ to establish in the other house a distinct power,
‘ which may render them altogether independent
‘ of, and consequently superior to, the other two
‘ branches of our Legislature. Upon such occa-
‘ sions, my Lords, we ought to consider, that all
‘ usurpations have been founded upon the most
‘ specious and plausible pretences ; and I shall
‘ readily grant, that the other house could not
‘ have thought of a more specious or plausible
‘ pretence for acquiring to themselves a new and
‘ dangerous power, than that of preventing cor-
‘ ruption ; but I hope your Lordships will see
‘ through the disguise, and prevent our constitu-
‘ tion’s being caught in the snare.

‘ If the other house were by this bill to acquire
‘ no new powers, the principal objection I have
‘ formerly made against such bills as this would,
‘ indeed, be remov’d ; but, my Lords, it is evi-
‘ dent, that they are, even by this bill, to acquire
‘ a new and distinct power. The members of
‘ that house are all to declare and give an account
‘ of every gratuity, reward, or present, they
‘ receive from the crown. Is there no use to be
‘ made of this declaration ? If it should be turn’d
‘ to no use, why should it be made ? Why should
‘ the necessity of making it be imposed upon any
‘ man in the kingdom ? If an use is to be made
‘ of

‘ of it, by whom is that use to be made? Why,
‘ by the other house, in a distinct and separate
‘ capacity, and without the concurrence of either
‘ of the other two branches of the Legislature.
‘ Nay, they are to become superior to the chief
‘ branch of our Legislature, to the Crown itself;
‘ for they are to judge of the actions of the crown,
‘ and may determine, that a well-merited reward
‘ given by the crown for the most eminent pub-
‘ lick services, was a corrupt reward given for a
‘ gentleman’s corrupt behaviour in their assembly.
‘ Is not this, my Lords, a new and a most
‘ dangerous power? It is, in my opinion, a
‘ power absolutely inconsistent with our consti-
‘ tution; for if the other house should once ren-
‘ der themselves superior to the crown, they
‘ would of course become superior to this house
‘ likewise, and would soon engross, as they have
‘ done before, the whole power of our govern-
‘ ment. They would either vote this house use-
‘ less, as they have once done already, or they
‘ would render it insignificant, by making it en-
‘ tirely subservient to them.

‘ Thus, I think, it is apparent, that our happy
‘ constitution would be brought into greater dan-
‘ ger by this bill’s being passed into a law, than it
‘ is at present, or can ever well be, from corrup-
‘ tion. But, my Lords, how does this bill guard
‘ against corruption? In my opinion, not in the least.
‘ The members are to declare upon oath every
‘ gratuity or reward they receive. If that gratui-
‘ ty or reward should be paid and received from a
‘ corrupt motive, will this ever compel a disco-
‘ very? Can we suppose, that a wretch so aban-
‘ doned as to betray and sell his country for a
‘ small reward, will ever have any regard to an
‘ oath; especially, in cases where it is allowed,
‘ there is no probability of convicting him of per-
‘ jury? We may as well, I think, make a law
‘ for

‘ for obliging a suspected man to swear, that he
 ‘ has never robb’d upon the highway. I hope,
 ‘ I shall be allowed to shew some regard for
 ‘ religion, by refusing to prostitute the sacred so-
 ‘ lemnity of an oath, in cases where it is almost
 ‘ certain, a man will rather perjure himself than
 ‘ confess his guilt. The laws of this kingdom
 ‘ have always been extremely cautious of subject-
 ‘ ing a man to an oath, in any case where his inte-
 ‘ rest may be concerned. By the common law
 ‘ it is never done: Even in equity, frauds only
 ‘ are discoverable by the oath of the party; for
 ‘ if a man be in danger of subjecting himself to a
 ‘ penalty, he is not obliged to answer; and even
 ‘ as to frauds, we seldom find any discovery
 ‘ made, except in cases where the defendant is
 ‘ suspicious of the plaintiff’s having some latent
 ‘ proofs against him. In this case, therefore, as
 ‘ in all others of the like nature, an oath will be
 ‘ no check upon wicked men, who are ready
 ‘ to sell their country for a bribe or a corrupt re-
 ‘ ward; and it may be a trap for the honest and
 ‘ virtuous, who have served their country faith-
 ‘ fully and effectually, and have most justly re-
 ‘ ceived from the crown, a small reward for their
 ‘ service.

‘ But suppose, my Lords, there were in this
 ‘ case no such danger; yet surely every oath that
 ‘ is imposed by an express law, ought to be such
 ‘ a one as may be understood by those that are to
 ‘ take it. The oath proposed by this bill is, I
 ‘ think, such a one as can be understood by no
 ‘ man. Gratuity or reward are words so vague
 ‘ and indeterminate, that no man can tell what to
 ‘ make of them. It is extremely difficult to settle
 ‘ the boundary between a favour and a gratuity;
 ‘ and the favours that may be conferred by the
 ‘ crown upon the subject are so various, and so
 ‘ frequent, that there would be no end of decla-
 ‘ ring

ring them, nor any possibility of determining what was a favour, and what a gratuity. A post given to a gentleman's brother or son, nay, even to his footman, at his request, might be interpreted as a gratuity; and would very probably be so by the other house, in case the majority of them did not like his face, and he had for some time neglected to declare it. This would introduce so much confusion, and is apparently so inconvenient for every gentleman that has, or may have, the honour to be a member of the other house, that, I am persuaded, they would never have agreed to a regulation so inconvenient, and at the same time so ineffectual for the end pretended, if they had not had some other view than merely that of preventing corruption.

Whether they were serious or not in passing this bill, can be of no consequence, my Lords, to us. If it were a good bill, I should be for passing it, whether they were serious or not. But, as I think it a bad bill, as I think it a regulation altogether ineffectual for the end pretended, and very dangerous with regard to the end which I suppose to be concealed, therefore, I shall be against its passing, without considering in the least, whether or no the other house, or any number of them, was serious in sending it up. If your Lordships think, we have now any just apprehensions from corruption; if we are in any present danger of having a majority of the other house made more subservient to the crown than they ought to be, by pensions and pecuniary rewards, any one that thinks so may present a bill, or you may order the judges to bring in a bill, for obviating that danger; but the bill now before you is not only so imperfect, but so improper for attaining that end, that I think it impossible to make any thing

‘ thing of it in the committee ; and therefore,
‘ I shall be against our taking up our time, which
‘ may be otherwise so usefully employ’d, with go-
‘ ing into a committee upon it.

‘ For my own part, my Lords, I do not think,
‘ we are in any immediate danger from corrup-
‘ tion ; I do not think, we can be in any such dan-
‘ ger, while we enjoy the happiness of having his
‘ present Majesty upon the throne. He will ne-
‘ ver ask, he will never allow his Parliament to be
‘ ask’d to do any thing, but what is necessary for
‘ the publick good ; and for such purposes no
‘ pension or gratuity to any of the members will
‘ ever be necessary, unless faction, sedition, and
‘ disaffection should get possession of a great ma-
‘ jority of the nation, which, I hope, will never
‘ be the case. We have, therefore, no immediate
‘ call to contrive any new barriers against corrup-
‘ tion, and if any of his Majesty’s successors should
‘ form ambitious views against our liberties, and
‘ think of rendering those views successful by
‘ corruption, the barriers we have already, will, I
‘ hope, be able to defend our liberties against such
‘ attempts, till our posterity can raise new and
‘ more effectual barricades against the approach of
‘ that political distemper.

‘ I hope, my Lords, I shall always be as jea-
‘ lous of the liberties of my country as any rea-
‘ sonable man ought to be, and I confess, we
‘ ought always to look with a jealous eye
‘ upon the new projects formed by ministers ; but
‘ there is another set of men, upon whom we
‘ ought likewise to look with a jealous eye, and
‘ that is, those gentlemen, who, under the pre-
‘ tence of preserving or securing our liberties, are
‘ for new-modelling our constitution, at a time
‘ when there is no apparent, much less an immi-
‘ nent danger. Securing our liberties has been
‘ before now made a pretence for destroying them,
‘ and

‘ and the vulgar and ignorant are always fond of
‘ every thing that’s new, which has too often ren-
‘ der’d such designs successful. The bill now be-
‘ fore us, I think, I have some reason to consider
‘ in this light, and the more so, because of the
‘ motion that was since made in the other house,
‘ for excluding all placemen, except a very few,
‘ from having seats in that assembly. Both these
‘ regulations were, I find, promoted by the same
‘ men; and if both had succeeded, our happy
‘ constitution would have been brought into the
‘ most imminent danger; for the crown would
‘ then have been under a necessity of employing
‘ none but persons of low rank in its service,
‘ which would of course have render’d the ser-
‘ vice contemptible, and might very probably
‘ have produced such a civil war as we had, but
‘ last century, between our Sovereign and his
‘ Parliament. A noble historian has observ’d, that
‘ in King *Charles I*st’s time, the arts and cla-
‘ mours of the disaffected party at last so far pre-
‘ vailed, that it became scandalous to serve the
‘ crown, which so weakened the hands of the
‘ crown, and so much exalted the power of the
‘ leading men in the other house, that they
‘ involved their country in a bloody and destruc-
‘ tive civil war, overset our monarchy, and at last
‘ turned your Lordships out of doors. These
‘ wicked designs began to be formed in the year
‘ 1640, and if these two new regulations had met
‘ with success, I should have had the sorrow to
‘ suspect, that some such designs were now in
‘ embryo; but thank God, one of them was de-
‘ feated, upon its first appearance, in the house of
‘ Commons; and, I hope, the other will be de-
‘ feated by your Lordships.’

Lord *Carteret* stood up next, and spoke in
substance as follows, viz.

‘ My

Lord Carteret's speech.

My Lords,

It signifies nothing to make declamations against corruption, unless we do something against it. I believe, no man ever yet ventured to declaim seriously in its favour; but many have declaimed powerfully against it, and yet, at the same time, have as powerfully, and much more effectually, recommended it by their practice. The people without doors will but little regard what we say against corruption; but the example of this house will have a great effect. Let us convince them by what we do, that no Lord of this house is guilty of being corrupted, which I am convinced, is the case, and the crime will sink by the weight of its own infamy. But if your Lordships, by rejecting this bill, should raise but a suspicion, that any of you are guilty, that very suspicion will give countenance to the low tools of corruption; and your supposed example will establish and propagate a real practice.

I am extremely sorry, my Lords, to hear his Majesty's name mentioned upon this occasion. I would not be so unjust, even to his Majesty's ministers, as to attempt to vindicate them upon such an occasion; because a vindication always supposes some previous reproach. The confidence we have in his Majesty's wisdom and justice, makes such a vindication, with respect to him, absolutely unnecessary; and, I hope, no one of his Ministers stands in need of any vindication upon this head. But suppose some one of his Majesty's successors should be suspected, should be known to have designs against our liberties, suppose his ministers should be known to make use of pensions and bribes, in order to render their Master's designs successful, and suppose such a bill as this should be brought

into

‘ into either house of Parliament, in order to put
‘ a stop to such dangerous practices, would any
‘ member rise up in his place, and accuse his So-
‘ vereign of having such designs? Would any
‘ member of either house stand up in his place,
‘ and directly accuse a minister, even tho’ he had
‘ the most evident proofs of his being guilty of
‘ corrupting the members? My Lords, no mem-
‘ ber would be such a madman, unless he were
‘ well assured of having a majority in both houses
‘ against corruption; and this he could no way be
‘ assured of, but by the success of the bill. Were
‘ those designs of the Prince, and those practices
‘ of his ministers, as apparent as the sun at noon-
‘ day, both the Prince and the minister would be
‘ vindicated by their tools in Parliament; and the
‘ patrons of the bill, till they saw its fate, would
‘ then do, out of prudence, what we now do, out
‘ of justice, at least with respect to his Majesty.
‘ They would pass compliments upon the Prince
‘ then upon the throne, they would, perhaps,
‘ even compliment his ministers; but as soon as
‘ they had, by the success and effect of their bill,
‘ cleared the two houses from corruption, they
‘ might then probably begin to talk in another
‘ strain, with regard to the ministers; because up-
‘ on removing the corrupted, it would be easy to
‘ make the crimes of the corruptor appear.

‘ The question now before us, my Lords, does
‘ not relate to persons, but to things. It does not
‘ relate to his present Majesty, or his next succef-
‘ sor; nor to the present, or any future admini-
‘ stration. The question is, whether we should
‘ be in danger of having our constitution over-
‘ turned by means of corruption, supposing we
‘ had a Prince upon the throne that would at-
‘ tempt it, and an administration that would, in
‘ the most cunning manner, use all the methods
‘ now in the power of the crown for accomplishing
‘ it.

‘ it. This is the proper question now before us,
‘ and if your Lordships do not answer this que-
‘ stion in the affirmative, I will be bold to say,
‘ you differ in opinion from nine tenths of the
‘ nation, I believe, I may say, from ninety-nine
‘ out of a hundred of those who are not misled
‘ in their judgment by some corrupt prejudice.
‘ But if you do answer it in the affirmative, you
‘ must allow, that the danger itself is present,
‘ tho’ we may depend upon our not falling into
‘ it during his present Majesty’s life. Therefore
‘ in prudence, we ought to provide against it,
‘ whilst it is in our power; for it is a sort of
‘ danger from whence there is no legal recovery;
‘ if we once fall into it, it will be impossible to get
‘ any law passed for preventing corruption. The
‘ Reverend Prelate, when he says, he hopes, our
‘ posterity may at such a conjuncture be able to raise
‘ new barricades against corruption, seems to for-
‘ get, that no new barricade can be raised without
‘ the Royal Assent; and will a Prince who intends
‘ to rule by corruption, give the Royal Assent to
‘ any bill for preventing it? Will not all corrupt
‘ methods be made use of to prevent such a bill’s
‘ passing both houses? And if it should, by a
‘ miraculous flow of virtue on one side, and very
‘ imprudent, or rash management on the other, be
‘ carried through both houses, may not the Prince
‘ prevent its being passed into a law, till that flow
‘ of virtue subsides, or till he can fall upon me-
‘ thods to apply more properly the infinite means
‘ of corruption now lodged in the crown?

‘ It will, therefore, be hardly possible to recover
‘ from the danger of losing our liberties by cor-
‘ ruption, after we have once actually fallen into
‘ it. Other dangers we may recover from, be-
‘ cause we become sensible of them before we have
‘ lost our strength; but corruption, like a con-
‘ sumption, is a distemper that comes by slow
‘ degrees,

degrees, and infeebles as it approaches; so that before we become sensible of our danger, we have no strength to use the proper remedies, and often think we are in perfect health when we are just expiring. For this reason, my Lords, the dependence we have upon his present Majesty's wisdom and goodness, the confidence we have, that no corrupt practices have of late been made use of, are so far from being arguments against the bill, that they are strong arguments in its favour. A time like this, is the only time we can take for preventing such a contagious distemper; for if the infected should once get the power into their hands, they will lock up, instead of being lock'd up by the healthful. Therefore, if this bill can be supposed to have any effect, and cannot be supposed liable to any very great inconvenience, we ought to embrace the favourable opportunity we now have, of doing, as well as declaiming against corruption.

As to the objections that have been made against some particular clauses or expressions in the bill, they are reasons, my Lords, not for rejecting but amending it: Nay, if we despaired of being able to make a good bill of this now before us, yet we ought to go into a committee upon it, that every Lord may give his sentiments freely upon the several parts of it, and may offer what clauses or amendments he thinks necessary for rendering it effectual; because, from thence, a good and effectual bill may be formed, and made ready for being offered to the next session of Parliament. For this reason, I must think, that no Lord can be against committing it, unless he be of opinion, that the laws now in being are sufficient for preventing any corrupt influence in either house of Parliament; and however general such an opinion may be in this house, it is such a one as will not, I am sure,

‘ meet with approbation from the generality of
‘ people without doors; therefore, if this were
‘ really my opinion, I should, nevertheless, be,
‘ not only for committing, but for passing the bill
‘ now under our consideration, with such amend-
‘ ments as may be thought proper in the commit-
‘ tee; because it would quiet the minds of the
‘ people without doors, and can be attended with
‘ no real inconvenience, whatever may be pre-
‘ tended to the contrary.

‘ I must confess, my Lords, I could not con-
‘ ceive what the Reverend Prelate meant, when
‘ he talk’d of a new and dangerous power being
‘ to be added to the house of Commons by this
‘ bill. If such a bill should be passed into a law,
‘ it will, indeed, add new power to that house,
‘ because it will add to their character, which is
‘ the chief, and the only solid foundation of all
‘ power; but if your Lordships reject such a bill,
‘ after they have passed it, I am sure, it will lessen
‘ yours; and then, ’tis true, the power of the o-
‘ ther house may become dangerous; for if the
‘ character, and, consequently, the power of the
‘ other house should be raised, and yours, at the
‘ same time, lessened, you may not only put it in
‘ their power, but you may make it necessary for
‘ them, to vote you useless a second time. It was
‘ this very thing that enabled them to do so about
‘ a century ago. It was not the arts, or the cla-
‘ mours of the disaffected, but the measures pur-
‘ sued by the court, that rendered it scandalous to
‘ serve the crown in King *Charles* Ist’s time; and it
‘ was the supporting of such measures, or at least
‘ preventing the authors of them from being pun-
‘ ished, that made this house forfeit its character
‘ among the people. The Reverend Bench ought
‘ to remember the fatal consequences occasioned
‘ by that forfeiture, and how much their bench
‘ contributed to it by their behaviour at that time.

‘ It

‘ It was the imprudent and servile behaviour of
‘ a majority of this house, that then raised the
‘ power of the other, removed the Reverend Pre-
‘ lates from amongst us, and, at last, made the
‘ house itself really useless, before it was voted so
‘ by the other; for when we have not wisdom,
‘ virtue, and courage enough to be a check upon
‘ the other two branches of the legislature, we are
‘ really useless, whether we are voted so or no.

‘ By this bill, my Lords, there are no such
‘ powers as the Reverend Prelate means, to be add-
‘ ed to the other house: They are to acquire no
‘ power, nor any right, but what they already
‘ enjoy. They neither are, nor are, by this bill,
‘ to be rendered superior to the crown; but they
‘ are, and ought to be a check upon the crown;
‘ and if the publick money should be squandered
‘ away by the crown, in unmerited or ill-merited
‘ pensions and gratuities, they might take notice
‘ of it, and put a stop to it, though no such bill
‘ as this should pass into a law: They ought to
‘ do so: They would be deficient in their duty if
‘ they did not; and one of the ends of this bill is,
‘ to prevent that deficiency; for it cannot be sup-
‘ posed, that a house of Commons would take
‘ notice of, or put a stop to, such squandering, if
‘ a majority of them were receivers of such pen-
‘ sions or gratuities. Even with respect to their
‘ own members, they are not, by this bill, to ac-
‘ quire any new power: They have already a right
‘ to judge, whether any gentleman that claims it,
‘ has a good title to be a member of their house;
‘ and this bill is only to furnish them with a new,
‘ and a necessary method for enquiring into that
‘ title. A pensioner has no more a right to be a
‘ member of the other house than a *Roman Catho-
‘ lick*: The latter may be chosen, and may take
‘ his place there, if he will take the oaths pre-
‘ scribed by law; but those oaths have been found

‘ to be an effectual bar to *Roman Catholics*, and,
 ‘ I hope, the oaths prescribed by this bill, if it
 ‘ should pass into a law, will be found to be an
 ‘ effectual bar to pensioners. If the law had only
 ‘ inflicted a penalty upon a *Roman Catholick* who
 ‘ should sit and vote in the other house, it would,
 ‘ certainly, have had no effect, because of the
 ‘ impossibility of proving the offence; and as it is
 ‘ more difficult to prove a man’s being a pensioner,
 ‘ than to prove a man’s being a *Roman Catholick*,
 ‘ is it possible to imagine, that the laws now in
 ‘ being can be effectual, for preventing pensioners
 ‘ from sitting and voting in the other house? Can
 ‘ any reason be assigned for not taking that method
 ‘ in the one case, which has been found so effectual
 ‘ in the other? A gentleman’s refusing to take the
 ‘ oaths, is very much contrary to his private in-
 ‘ terest, because it subjects him to several penalties
 ‘ and disabilities; yet, I believe, the Reverend Pre-
 ‘ late will not say, that no such oaths ought to be
 ‘ imposed, because of its promoting perjury; and,
 ‘ I am convinced, even the Reverend Prelate will
 ‘ allow, we are now in greater danger from pen-
 ‘ sioners than from Papists.

‘ But the oath proposed by this bill is, it seems,
 ‘ an unintelligible oath, because the words *favour*
 ‘ and *gratuity* cannot be certainly distinguished.
 ‘ My Lords, they are, I think, as distinct as any
 ‘ two words in the *English* language. No man
 ‘ will suppose, that a post granted to a brother or
 ‘ servant at his request, is a gratuity to him, un-
 ‘ less he is to reap some benefit by the grant. But
 ‘ suppose a man should think so, and, therefore,
 ‘ give an account of it to the house, where would
 ‘ be the harm? Such a declaration would give the
 ‘ other house no greater power than they have at
 ‘ present. They might, perhaps, pass a wrong
 ‘ judgment, and turn him out of their house when
 ‘ they ought not; but may they not do the same
 ‘ as

‘ as the case now stands? And will you prevent
‘ its being in their power to come at the truth of
‘ a fact, lest they should pass a wrong judgment
‘ when they have come at that truth? That judg-
‘ ment would subject no man to a penalty; for
‘ the penalties are to be recovered only at common
‘ law; and it cannot be supposed, the judges
‘ would condemn a man, for sitting in the other
‘ house after he had got a little post for his ser-
‘ vant, or a great one for his brother, unless it
‘ appeared, that the member was quartered upon
‘ his brother, which may sometimes be the case.

‘ But, I believe, my Lords, we have no occa-
‘ sion to be afraid of the other house’s misinter-
‘ preting a favour, or even a reward, and taking
‘ it for a pension or bribe, if the receiver be such
‘ a one as has truly merited the reward. If Ad-
‘ miral *Vernon* were now a member of the other
‘ house, and should receive a reward from the
‘ crown for the service he has done his country,
‘ would any member look upon it as a bribe? No
‘ one would; and, I believe, he would soon con-
‘ vince them, he did not himself look upon it as
‘ such. There is not, my Lords, the least dan-
‘ ger, that ever the other house will call a favour,
‘ or deserved reward, a pension or bribe: The
‘ danger is wholly upon the other side of the
‘ question. The other house may now call that a
‘ favour or deserved reward which is really a bribe,
‘ and even though this bill should pass into a law,
‘ they may do the same; but in this case, no more
‘ than the other, the judges, when the affair comes
‘ before them by way of prosecution for the pe-
‘ nalty, are not obliged to abide by the determina-
‘ tion of the house of Commons; and there is not
‘ near so much danger of the other house’s passing
‘ a wrong judgment in this respect, when all fa-
‘ vours and rewards are declared and acknowledg-

‘ ed publickly, as when most of them remain in
 ‘ *petto* of the corruptor and corrupted only.

‘ I hope, I have now answered all the objections
 ‘ made against committing this bill, and, there-
 ‘ fore, I shall conclude with observing to your
 ‘ Lordships, that if you reject it, all those who
 ‘ think we are in danger from corruption, will
 ‘ conclude, that it is already become impossible to
 ‘ guard against it by any legal means, and will,
 ‘ therefore, begin to think of some other method
 ‘ for preserving our constitution, which may prove
 ‘ of dangerous consequence to the Illustrious Fa-
 ‘ mily now upon our throne. This, I am sure,
 ‘ will have great weight with every one of your
 ‘ Lordships; and, therefore, if you consider it as
 ‘ you ought, the question must, I think, meet with
 ‘ the unanimous concurrence of this house, and
 ‘ the bill itself, with the assistance of every one of
 ‘ your Lordships, towards rendering it a perfect
 ‘ bill.’

The next that spoke was the Earl of *Abingdon*,
 whose speech was to this effect, *viz.*

‘ My Lords,

Earl of
Abingdon's
 speech.

‘ I rise up only to take notice, that I am sur-
 ‘ prized to hear this bill represented as a restraint
 ‘ upon the crown, with regard to its power of re-
 ‘ warding merit. Can the publication, or open
 ‘ declaration of such a reward, be any restraint
 ‘ either upon the giver or receiver? My Lords,
 ‘ when the reward is given for real and honoura-
 ‘ ble services, the publication of it adds honour
 ‘ both to the giver and receiver; and, therefore,
 ‘ I am convinced, that neither the giver nor re-
 ‘ ceiver will ever desire to have the gratuity con-
 ‘ cealed, but when it is given for some infamous
 ‘ piece of service; and if this bill should be a re-
 ‘ straint upon the power of giving rewards for
 ‘ such

‘ such services, I hope, no Lord will say, it ought
 ‘ to be an objection to the bill. For my part, I
 ‘ am so far from thinking it wrong, to oblige the
 ‘ members of the other house to give an account
 ‘ publickly of the rewards and gratuities they re-
 ‘ ceive from the crown, that I wish we had a law
 ‘ for obliging every man in the kingdom to do
 ‘ the same. It would be so far from lessening,
 ‘ that it would render the favours of the crown
 ‘ more honourable than they ever can otherwise
 ‘ be. We have a noble Duke amongst us, who
 ‘ now possesses an estate that was given by the
 ‘ crown to his ancestor, with the consent of both
 ‘ houses of Parliament, and with the approbation,
 ‘ I am sure, of a great majority of the nation. It
 ‘ was a reward given for real and great services;
 ‘ and the giving it in this publick manner, will be
 ‘ a lasting honour to the man that received it, to
 ‘ the Queen that gave it, and to the nation that
 ‘ approved of it.’

The Duke of *Newcastle* then stood up, and spoke in substance thus.

‘ My Lords,
 ‘ As one of the greatest grievances a society can
 ‘ be plagued with, is a multiplicity of unnecessary,
 ‘ ineffectual, and inconvenient laws, when we are
 ‘ to give our consent to the passing of a new law,
 ‘ for remedying a grievance already felt, or pre-
 ‘ venting one that is foreseen, we ought to consider
 ‘ maturely, whether the law proposed be necessa-
 ‘ ry, whether it will be effectual, and what incon-
 ‘ veniencies it may be attended with. In these
 ‘ three several lights I have considered the bill
 ‘ now before us; and the result in every one of
 ‘ them, so far as I can judge, is no way favoura-
 ‘ ble for the bill. With regard to the necessity of
 ‘ it, I must observe, that no bill for preventing a

Duke of
Newcastle's
speech.

‘ grievance, can be so necessary as one brought in
‘ for remedying a grievance; and, therefore, a
‘ bill of the former sort, before it can merit our
‘ approbation, as to the necessity of it, ought to
‘ stand unimpeached as to the two other heads.
‘ It cannot be said, that the bill now under our
‘ consideration is a bill for remedying a grievance
‘ already felt. We have before us no proof of
‘ there being at present any one pensioner or bri-
‘ bed person in the house of Commons. No such
‘ fact has been asserted even by the warmest ad-
‘ vocates for this bill, nor is there so much as an
‘ insinuation of it in any part of the preamble.
‘ The bill, therefore, is intended for preventing a
‘ grievance, or a danger, which some amongst us
‘ pretend to foresee; and the necessity for the bill
‘ must be in proportion to the perspicuity and
‘ certainty of that foresight.

‘ Now, my Lords, for my own part, I must
‘ confess, the danger pretended to be apprehended,
‘ is to me neither perspicuous nor certain. My
‘ foreseeing faculty may, perhaps, be less exten-
‘ sive than that of others; but whilst the members
‘ of the other house are, for the most part, gen-
‘ tlemen of the best families and fortunes in the
‘ kingdom, as they now are, and, I think, must
‘ always be, I can never think our constitution in
‘ any danger from corruption; because it is upon
‘ our constitution their estates and families depend;
‘ and it cannot be supposed, that a gentleman of a
‘ large estate and antient family, will consent to
‘ render both precarious, by putting an end to our
‘ constitution, for the sake of any pension or bribe,
‘ it is even now in the power of the crown to be-
‘ stow; especially when he considers, that even
‘ his pension must cease, or the possessing of his
‘ bribe will become precarious, as soon as our con-
‘ stitution is destroyed. \ For this reason, suppose
‘ we should fall under the misfortune of having a
‘ Prince

‘ Prince upon the throne, that formed projects a-
‘ gainst our liberties, yet, I cannot think, it would
‘ be in the power of that Prince, to render his
‘ projects successful, by bribing the members of
‘ the other house, unless he should first turn out
‘ of it, most of those who have any estates of
‘ their own to depend on; and I cannot see how
‘ this is possible, considering the methods pre-
‘ scribed by our constitution, for a gentleman’s
‘ acquiring and preserving a right to sit in that
‘ house. The danger pretended to be apprehend-
‘ ed, is, therefore, so far from being foreseen by
‘ me, that I do not think it possible for us to fall
‘ into any such, and, consequently, I must think
‘ the bill quite unnecessary.

‘ Then, my Lords, as to its being effectual:
‘ Can any one suppose, that a man who is wicked
‘ enough to sell his country for a bribe, would
‘ have any regard for perjury? Can it be supposed,
‘ that he would refuse to take the oath prescribed
‘ by this bill, or that he would, in the least, bog-
‘ gle at denying, upon oath, his having ever re-
‘ ceived any pension, reward, or gratuity from
‘ the crown? Such a man will always stand more
‘ in awe of a penalty, than of any oath you can
‘ invent; and the penalties of perjury can be no
‘ more terrible to him, than equal penalties which
‘ may be inflicted by law, without interposing the
‘ sacred solemnity of an oath. It will always be
‘ as difficult to prove the perjury, as to prove the
‘ bribery; because the latter crime must be proved,
‘ before the criminal can be convicted of the for-
‘ mer; and, therefore, if the secrecy of the crime
‘ be an encouragement for men to be guilty of
‘ corruption, it will be an equal encouragement for
‘ their being guilty of perjury, by denying their
‘ corruption upon oath. From hence, I think,
‘ it is apparent, that the bill now before us may
‘ occasion a great deal of perjury, without having
‘ the

‘ the least effect, as to preventing the danger we
‘ may be in from corruption.

‘ This of occasioning frequent perjuries, and
‘ thereby rendering the crime familiar and fre-
‘ quent in other cases as well as this, will, in my
‘ opinion, be a most certain, and a most fatal
‘ consequence of passing the bill now before us
‘ into a law ; but this, my Lords, is far from be-
‘ ing the only inconvenience it will be attended
‘ with. If this bill, however amended, should
‘ be passed into a law, it will be attended
‘ with so many, and such dangerous inconve-
‘ niencies, that nothing, I think, but the ut-
‘ most necessity should prevail with us to agree
‘ to it. Suppose a gentleman should be candid
‘ enough to declare to the other house any gratui-
‘ ty or reward he receives from the crown, can
‘ any one tell what such an assembly may do up-
‘ on such a declaration? They may, thereupon,
‘ vote him guilty of bribery, and not only expel
‘ him, but commit him to *Newgate*, and address
‘ his Majesty to order his Attorney-General to
‘ prosecute him. In this case, no merit, no pub-
‘ lick service would be admitted as an excuse :
‘ Even Admiral *Vernon* himself might be treated
‘ in this manner, notwithstanding his great ser-
‘ vices, if he happen’d to make such a declaration
‘ in a house of Commons that did not like his
‘ face. I shall grant, that the penalties can be re-
‘ cover’d only by a prosecution at common law,
‘ and that upon such prosecution the judge and
‘ jury are not bound to follow the judgment of
‘ the house of commons ; but such a previous
‘ judgment would be of the most dangerous con-
‘ sequence to the person accused ; for a judge
‘ would be loth to direct a jury, or to determine,
‘ contrary to the judgment of a house of Commons.

‘ Such a declaration might, therefore, be, in
‘ many cases, of the most fatal consequence to
‘ some

‘ some of the best and most faithful servants of
‘ the crown. If a house of Commons should,
‘ at any time, become factious, and that such a
‘ thing may happen, will not, I believe, be denied,
‘ the ablest and most faithful servants of the
‘ crown would be in the greatest danger, if they
‘ happened to be members of the other house.
‘ Nay, such a declaration might be of the most
‘ dangerous consequence to some of your Lord-
‘ ships; for if any member of the other house
‘ should receive a well-merited reward from the
‘ crown, and should declare it to the house, as he
‘ would be obliged to do, should this bill be
‘ passed into a law, they might first vote it bribe-
‘ ry, and then enquire who it was that gave it,
‘ or advised giving it; and if upon such an en-
‘ quiry, it should appear, that any of your
‘ Lordships had been concerned in giving or ad-
‘ vising it, they might, and would, probably,
‘ make it a ground of impeachment against that
‘ Lord who had convey’d, or advised giving,
‘ what they had voted to be a corrupt gratuity or
‘ reward.

‘ Thus, my Lords, the bill now before us,
‘ should it pass into a law, might be made a han-
‘ dle for oppressing the best servants of the crown,
‘ and, on the other hand, it may become a screen
‘ for pensioners and corrupted members; for by
‘ this bill, the other house is not obliged to re-
‘ move a pensioner, even after he has declared
‘ that he is so; and if a majority of them were
‘ pensioners, it is not to be supposed, they would
‘ remove any man for having a pension. Some
‘ excuse would be found for the most corrupt re-
‘ ward that could be given, for the most flagrant
‘ bribery that could be made use of. The most
‘ notorious pensioner would regularly declare eve-
‘ ry year to the house, that he had received such
‘ a sum of money from the crown, as a reward
‘ for

‘ for some supposed publick services, and the
‘ house would, every year, declare it to be no pen-
‘ sion, but a proper and just reward. This would,
‘ of course, prevent any member’s being prosecu-
‘ ted for sitting and voting in that house, after
‘ having a pension settled upon him by the crown,
‘ for no private man would venture to prosecute,
‘ after a house of Commons had declared, that
‘ there was no ground for such a prosecution ;
‘ and thus the bill, now under our consideration,
‘ instead of enforcing, would invalidate the laws
‘ we have now in being, for preventing pension-
‘ ers from having seats in the house of Com-
‘ mons.

‘ I think I have now shewn, my Lords, that
‘ this bill is unnecessary, that it will be ineffectual,
‘ and that it will be attended with many and
‘ great inconveniencies. These are the lights in
‘ which it appears to me, and no Lord that views
‘ it in the same light, can, I think, give his con-
‘ sent to the passing it into a law. As for the ef-
‘ fect, our rejecting it may have upon the people
‘ without doors, I am extreamly easy about it.
‘ I believe, no one will doubt my affection for
‘ our present Royal Family, or my zeal for their
‘ preservation and security ; but I can never be
‘ induced to think, that their security depends up-
‘ on our passing unnecessary laws, and much less
‘ upon our passing such a law as this, which, in
‘ my opinion, would very much diminish the pre-
‘ rogative of the crown. The power of reward-
‘ ing merit, without the controul of either house
‘ of Parliament, is one of the chief prerogatives,
‘ and one of the firmest supports of the crown ;
‘ and as this power would, by the bill now before
‘ us, should it pass into a law, be exposed to the
‘ daily controul of the house of Commons, I am
‘ sure no man that views it in the light I do,
‘ and wishes well to the Royal Family, can find
‘ fault

‘ fault with our rejecting it. The security of
 ‘ our present Royal Family depends upon the
 ‘ preservation of our constitution in all its parts.
 ‘ The liberties and privileges of the people have,
 ‘ ever since the accession of this Family, remain-
 ‘ ed untouch’d, unattempted to be incroached on
 ‘ by the crown; and in return, the people ought
 ‘ not, I think, to attempt to incroach upon the
 ‘ prerogatives of the crown. It is upon this mu-
 ‘ tual justice and moderation, the preservation of
 ‘ our constitution depends: It is upon this the
 ‘ security of our present Royal Family depends;
 ‘ and therefore, I hope, your Lordships will una-
 ‘ nimously agree, not only in refusing this mo-
 ‘ tion, but in rejecting the bill.’

The next speech we shall give, was that made
 by the Earl of *Chesterfield*, the purport of which
 was as follows, *viz.*

‘ My Lords,
 ‘ It is now so late, and so much has been said Earl of Che-
 ‘ in favour of the question, by Lords much abler sterfield's
 ‘ than I, that I shall detain you but a very short speech.
 ‘ while with what I have to say upon the subject.
 ‘ It has been said, by a noble Duke, that this bill
 ‘ can be look’d on, only as a bill for preventing
 ‘ a grievance that is foreseen, and not as a bill
 ‘ for remedying a grievance that is already felt,
 ‘ because it is not asserted, nor so much as infi-
 ‘ nuated, in the preamble of the bill, that any cor-
 ‘ rupt practices are now made use of for gaining
 ‘ an undue influence over the other house. My
 ‘ Lords, this was the very reason for bringing in
 ‘ the bill: They could not assert that any such
 ‘ practices are now made use of, without a proof;
 ‘ and the means for coming at this proof, is what
 ‘ they want, and what they propose to get by this
 ‘ bill. They suspect there are such practices, but
 ‘ they

‘ they cannot prove it : The crime is of such a
‘ secret nature, that it can very seldom be proved
‘ by witnesses; and, therefore, they want to put
‘ it to the trial, at least, of being proved by the
‘ oath of one of the parties; which is a method
‘ often taken in cases that can admit of no other
‘ proof. This is, therefore, no argument of the
‘ grievance’s not being felt; for a man may, very
‘ sensibly, feel a grievance, and yet may not be
‘ able to prove it.

‘ That there is a suspicion of some such prac-
‘ tices being now made use of, or that they will
‘ soon be made use of, the many remonstrances
‘ from all parts of the united kingdoms are a
‘ sufficient proof: That this suspicion has crept
‘ into the other house, their having so frequently
‘ sent up this bill, is a manifest demonstration,
‘ and a strong argument for its being necessary to
‘ have some such bill passed into a law. The
‘ other house must be allowed to be better judges
‘ of what passes, or may pass, within their own
‘ walls, than we can pretend to be. It is evident,
‘ they suspect, that corrupt practices have been,
‘ or may soon be made use of, for gaining an un-
‘ due influence over some of their members; and
‘ they have calculated this bill for curing the evil
‘ if it is felt, for preventing it if it is only fore-
‘ seen. That any such practices have actually
‘ been made use of, or are now made use of, is
‘ what I shall not pretend to affirm; but, I am
‘ sure, I shall not affirm the contrary. If any
‘ such are made use of, I will, with confidence,
‘ vindicate his Majesty. I am sure he knows no-
‘ thing of them. I am sure he would disdain to
‘ suffer them; but I cannot pass such a com-
‘ pliment upon his ministers, nor upon any set of
‘ ministers that ever was, or will be, in this na-
‘ tion; and, therefore, I think, I cannot more
‘ faithfully, more effectually, serve his present
‘ Majesty,

‘ Majesty, as well as his successors, than by putting it out of the power of any minister to gain a corrupt influence over either house of Parliament. Such an attempt may be necessary for the security of the minister; but can never be necessary for, must always be inconsistent with, the security of his Master; and the more necessary it is for the minister’s security, the more inconsistent it will always be with the King’s, and the more dangerous to the liberties of the nation.

‘ To pretend, my Lords, that this bill diminishes, or any way incroaches upon the prerogative, is something very strange. What prerogative, my Lords? Has the crown a prerogative to bribe, to infringe the laws, by sending its pensioners into the other house? To say so, is destroying the credit, the authority of the crown, under pretence of supporting its prerogative. If his Majesty knew, that any man received a pension from him, or any thing like a pension, and yet kept his seat in the other house, he would himself declare it, or withdraw his pension, because he knows it is against law. This bill, therefore, no way diminishes or incroaches upon the prerogatives of the crown, which can never be exercised but for the publick good: It diminishes only the prerogatives usurped by ministers, which are never exercised but for its destruction. The crown may still reward merit in the proper way, that is, openly. The bill is intended, and can operate only against clandestine rewards or gratuities given by ministers: These are scandalous, and never were, nor will be given but for scandalous services.

‘ True generosity, and true merit, my Lords, delight in sun-shine. It is glorious to reward true merit, it is glorious to receive the reward;
‘ and,

‘ and, therefore, whoever gives or receives the
 ‘ reward, will be fond of doing it publickly,
 ‘ and of declaring it openly, without fear of being
 ‘ impeached of corruption. When Admiral *Ver-*
 ‘ *non* was a member of the other house, the ma-
 ‘ jority was generally against him : They did not
 ‘ then like his face ; and, I believe, if he were
 ‘ still a member, they would as little like it now ;
 ‘ yet, if he should receive a reward from the
 ‘ crown, that majority would not, I believe, vote
 ‘ that reward to be a bribe. I am sensible, majo-
 ‘ rities have sometimes done very extraordinary
 ‘ things ; but yet, I do not believe, they would
 ‘ do this ; because that admiral has so well de-
 ‘ served a reward. He has done with *six* ships,
 ‘ about two thousand seamen, and two hundred
 ‘ tatter’d soldiers from *Jamaica*, what, we are told,
 ‘ could not be done by a large squadron, and, at
 ‘ least, eight thousand seamen, when our ships and
 ‘ sailors lay rotting at the *Bastimento’s*. When war
 ‘ was resolv’d on, he was call’d from plowing the
 ‘ ground, to plow the main ; and as the service of
 ‘ his country required dispatch, he desired but *three*
 ‘ days to settle his family affairs. In time of peace,
 ‘ he was never employ’d : He was even disap-
 ‘ pointed in his preferment. The reason is plain :
 ‘ He was not fit for those services that entitle our
 ‘ sea and land captains to preferment in time of
 ‘ peace : He had shewed it, when he was a mem-
 ‘ ber of the other house ; and this, I believe, is
 ‘ the true reason of his not being a member now.
 ‘ But if he should be a member in the next Par-
 ‘ liament, as he probably will, if he lives, the
 ‘ passing of this bill, could no way prevent his Ma-
 ‘ jesty from rewarding him in any manner he may
 ‘ then think fit ; nor could his accepting of the
 ‘ reward, subject him to any inconvenience or
 ‘ danger.

‘ This

‘ This bill can, therefore, no way affect the pre-
‘ rogatives of the crown, or prevent any man’s
‘ receiving a just and well-deserved reward; which
‘ is the only reward the crown ought, or has
‘ any title, even from prerogative, to bestow;
‘ for this prerogative, like all the other preroga-
‘ tives of the crown, is so far subject to the con-
‘ troul of Parliament, that, if it be abused, the
‘ Parliament may enquire into, and punish the
‘ advisers of that abuse. As for the inconveni-
‘ encies that may arise from the other house’s unjustly
‘ expelling or imprisoning any of its own mem-
‘ bers, or from its screening pensioners and corrupt
‘ members, they may arise, tho’ this bill be never
‘ passed into a law; and will more probably a-
‘ rise if it is not, than if it is; for injustice of all
‘ kinds, is more to be fear’d from a corrupt house
‘ of Commons, under the influence of a wicked
‘ and insolent minister, than from the most factious
‘ house of Commons that ever appeared, or can
‘ appear in this kingdom; because the crown
‘ would certainly put an end to the latter, before
‘ it could do any mischief; but the former will
‘ be patronized and continued, as long as the
‘ crown is under the direction of such a mini-
‘ ster; or, at least, till that minister has got it into
‘ his power, to get a new one chosen, as abandon-
‘ ed, and as much under his influence as the old.

‘ It is very remarkable, my Lords, it is even
‘ diverting, to see such a squeamishness about per-
‘ jury upon this occasion, among those, who, upon
‘ other occasions have invented and enacted multi-
‘ tudes of oaths, to be taken by men who are un-
‘ der great temptations, from their private interest,
‘ to be guilty of perjury. Is not this the case of
‘ almost every oath that relates to the collection
‘ of the publick revenue, or to the exercise of any
‘ office? Is not this perjury one of the chief ob-
‘ jections made by the Dissenters against the test
‘ and

‘ and corporation act? And shall we shew a less concern for the preservation of our constitution, than for the preservation of our church? The Reverend Bench should be cautious of making use of this argument; for if they will not allow us an oath for the preservation of the former, it may induce many people to think, they ought not to be allowed an oath for the preservation of the latter.

‘ By this time, I hope, my Lords, all the inconveniencies pretended to arise from this bill, have vanish’d; and, therefore, I shall consider some of the arguments brought to shew, that it is not necessary. Here I must observe, that most of the arguments made use of for this purpose, are equally strong for a repeal of the laws we have now in being, against admitting pensioners to sit and vote in the other house. If it be impossible to suppose that a gentleman of great estate, and ancient family, can, by a pension, be influenced to do what he ought not to do, and if we must suppose that none but such gentlemen can ever get into the other house, I am sure, the laws for preventing pensioners from having seats in that house, are quite unnecessary, and ought to be repealed. Therefore, if these arguments prevail with your Lordships to put a negative upon the present question, I shall expect to see that negative followed by a motion for the repeal of those laws: Nay, in a few sessions, I shall expect to see a bill brought in, for preventing any man’s being a member of the other house, but such as have some place or pension under the crown. As an argument for such a bill, it may be said, that his Majesty’s most faithful subjects ought to be chosen members of Parliament, and that those gentlemen will always be most faithful to the King, that receive the King’s money. I shall grant, my Lords, that such gentlemen will always be the
‘ most

‘ most faithful, and the most obedient to the mi-
‘ nister ; but for this very reason, I should be for
‘ excluding most of them from Parliament. The
‘ King’s real interest, however much he may
‘ be made by his minister to mistake it, must al-
‘ ways be the same with the people’s, but the
‘ minister’s interest is generally distinct from, and
‘ often contrary to both ; therefore, I shall always
‘ be for excluding, as much as possible, from Par-
‘ liament, every man who is under the least in-
‘ ducement to prefer the interest of the mini-
‘ ster, to that of both King and people ; and this
‘ I take to be the case of every gentleman, let
‘ his estate and family be what they will, that holds
‘ a pension at the will of the minister.

‘ Those who say, they depend so much upon
‘ the honour, integrity, and impartiality of men
‘ of family and fortune, seem to think, our consti-
‘ tution can never be dissolv’d, as long as we have
‘ the shadow of a Parliament. My opinion, my
‘ Lords, is so very different, that, if ever our
‘ constitution be dissolv’d, if ever an absolute
‘ monarchy be established in this Kingdom, I am
‘ convinc’d, it will be under that shadow. Our
‘ constitution consists in the two houses of Parlia-
‘ ment’s being a check upon the crown, as well
‘ as upon one another. If that check should e-
‘ ver be removed, if the crown should, by cor-
‘ rupt means, by places, pensions, and bribes, get
‘ the absolute direction of our two houses of Par-
‘ liament, our constitution will, from that mo-
‘ ment, be destroy’d. There would be no occa-
‘ sion for the crown to proceed any farther : It
‘ would be ridiculous to lay aside the forms of
‘ Parliament ; for under that shadow, our King
‘ would be more absolute, and might govern
‘ more arbitrarily, than he could do without it.
‘ A gentleman of family and fortune would not,
‘ perhaps, for the sake of a pension, agree to lay

‘ aside the forms of Parliament; because by his ve-
‘ nal service there, he earns his infamous pension,
‘ and could not expect the continuance of it, if
‘ those forms were laid aside; but a gentleman of
‘ family and fortune, may, for the sake of a pen-
‘ sion, whilst he is in Parliament, approve of the
‘ most blundering measures, consent to the most
‘ excessive and useless grants, enact the most op-
‘ pressive laws, pass the most villainous accounts,
‘ acquit the most heinous criminals, and condemn
‘ the most innocent persons, at the desire of that
‘ minister who pays him his pension. And if a
‘ majority of each house of Parliament consisted
‘ of such men, would it not be ridiculous in us to
‘ talk of our constitution, or to say we had any
‘ liberty left?

‘ This misfortune, this terrible condition we
‘ may be reduced to by corruption: As brave, as
‘ free a people as we, the *Romans*, were reduced
‘ to it by the same means; and to prevent such a
‘ horrid catastrophe, is the design of this bill. If
‘ it had begun in this house, it might, perhaps,
‘ have been look’d on as some sort of reflexion
‘ upon the other; but as it began in the other
‘ house, the reflexion will be upon us, if we do
‘ not pass it, with proper clauses for preventing an
‘ infamous pension being given to any of the
‘ members of this house. Your Lordships are
‘ not, ’tis true, so much liable to corruption as the
‘ other house: You have great estates: There are
‘ but few amongst us whose hard fate has not
‘ furnished them with an estate sufficient for sup-
‘ porting their dignity. But corruption is infecti-
‘ ous, my Lords; if it should get into the other
‘ house, it is too near us: *Ardet Ucalegon*. The
‘ infection may reach us; and should corruption
‘ ever enter this house, either to satisfy the imagi-
‘ nary wants of luxury, or the insatiable cravings
‘ of avarice, we shall lose all character: We shall
‘ become

‘ become entirely useless; and then, indeed, we
‘ ought to be laid aside.

‘ If people would at all think, if they would
‘ consider the consequences of corruption, there
‘ would be no occasion, my Lords, for making
‘ laws against it. It would appear so horrible, that
‘ no man would allow it to approach him. The
‘ corrupted ought to consider, that they do not
‘ sell their vote or their country only: These,
‘ perhaps, they may disregard; but they sell,
‘ likewise, themselves: They become the bond-
‘ slaves of the corruptor, who corrupts them, not
‘ for their sakes, but for his own. No man ever
‘ corrupted another, for the sake of doing him a
‘ service; and, therefore, if people would but
‘ consider, they would always reject the offer with
‘ disdain. But this is not to be expected. The
‘ histories of all countries, the histories even of
‘ our own country shew, it is not to be depended
‘ on. The proffered bribe, people think, will
‘ satisfy the immediate cravings of some infamous
‘ appetite; and this makes them swallow the al-
‘ luring bait, though the liberties of their country,
‘ the happiness of their posterity, and even their
‘ own liberty, evidently depend upon their refu-
‘ sing it. This makes it necessary, in every free
‘ state, to contrive, if possible, effectual laws a-
‘ gainst corruption; and as the laws we now have
‘ for excluding pensioners from the other house,
‘ are allowed to be ineffectual, we ought to make
‘ a trial, at least, of the remedy now proposed;
‘ for though it should prove ineffectual, it will be
‘ attended with this advantage, that it will put us
‘ upon contriving some other remedy that may be
‘ effectual; and the sooner such a remedy is con-
‘ trived and applied, the less danger we shall be
‘ exposed to, of falling into that fatal distemper,
‘ from which no free state, where it has once be-
‘ come general, has ever yet recovered.’

The next that spoke was the Lord *Harvey*, whose speech was to this effect, *viz.*

‘ My Lords,

Lord *Har-*
vey's speech,

‘ The argument has been already so fully canvassed, and the bill now under your Lordships consideration so minutely and so carefully dissected and exposed, that I should have given you no trouble upon the present occasion, if I had not observed, that the noble Lords who have spoke in favour of the bill, have mistaken the argument now properly under our consideration, and have, by that means, drawn the debate to an immoderate, and a very unnecessary length. Corruption, my Lords, is such a vile, such a dangerous practice, that no man will pretend to justify it, or to say that corrupt pensioners ought not to be excluded from having seats in either house of Parliament. I am sure no such thing has been attempted by any Lord who has spoke against this bill; and therefore, I cannot think there was the least occasion for any of that eloquence and wit, that have been made use of for explaining the danger and the deformity of corruption. The nature and consequences of corruption have nothing to do in this debate; and, if all that has been said upon that subject, by Lords who have spoke in favour of the bill, had been left out, the real subject now before us would have been long since exhausted. The question now before us is not, whether corruption be a good or a bad thing, but whether the methods proposed by this bill be proper for preventing it; and upon this question, I must agree with those who think, that they are improper, that they are dangerous, and that they will certainly be found altogether ineffectual.

‘ We

‘ We have been told, my Lords, that this bill
‘ is intended only as an enforcement of the laws
‘ now in being, for excluding pensioners from hav-
‘ ing seats in the other house; but, if we examine
‘ it strictly, I believe, it will be found to reach a
‘ great deal farther. I know that by the laws
‘ now in being, every one who has a pension du-
‘ ring pleasure, or for any number of years, either
‘ in his own name, or in the name of another per-
‘ son, in whole or in part for his benefit, is exclu-
‘ ded from having a seat in the other house; but,
‘ I do not know that there is, as yet, any law
‘ in being, for excluding those who have ever re-
‘ ceived any deserved reward or favour from the
‘ crown, on account of some eminent service they
‘ have rendered to the publick; and, though
‘ there are in this bill no express words for exclu-
‘ ding such men, yet, in effect, it gives the other
‘ house a power to exclude them as often as they
‘ have a mind, which is certainly a very great in-
‘ novation in our constitution, and it is a power
‘ that ought not, I think, to be lodged in the
‘ other house singly. If it should be thought
‘ necessary to exclude all such men from having
‘ seats in the other house, they ought to be ex-
‘ cluded by an express law for that purpose, as
‘ pensioners now are; or, if it should be thought
‘ necessary to subject every member of the other
‘ house that receives any gratuity or reward from
‘ the crown, to a trial, in order to determine whe-
‘ ther that gratuity or reward ought to be called
‘ corruption, that trial ought to be by the laws of
‘ his country, and not by the arbitrary vote of the
‘ other house of Parliament, which will be the
‘ certain consequence of passing this bill into a
‘ law; for when a gentleman declares, he has re-
‘ ceived such a gratuity or reward from the crown,
‘ we are not to suppose, the other house will let it
‘ rest there; they will certainly take upon them to

‘ determine, whether it was given for any publick
 ‘ service, or as a bribe for his voting in their
 ‘ house; and, in this case, it is to be feared, they
 ‘ will try the person much oftner than the cause.

‘ For this reason, my Lords, supposing it were
 ‘ necessary to exclude from the other house, or
 ‘ subject to a trial, every man that, during his
 ‘ continuance in that house, shall receive any gra-
 ‘ tuity or reward from the crown, I think the
 ‘ method proposed by this bill, a very improper
 ‘ method for doing it; but this is far from being
 ‘ the only impropriety that may be objected a-
 ‘ gainst the bill. The words gratuity or reward
 ‘ are so general, and may be applied to such trifles,
 ‘ that, in my opinion, it would be ridiculous to
 ‘ oblige gentlemen to make a solemn declaration of
 ‘ every gratuity or reward they receive from the
 ‘ crown. A horse or a watch, nay, the least trifle
 ‘ that can be given by the crown, may be called
 ‘ a gratuity; and surely it would be ridiculous to
 ‘ oblige a gentleman to make a solemn declaration,
 ‘ before one of the branches of our legislature, of
 ‘ his having received such a trifle from the crown:
 ‘ Yet, if you pass the bill with these general
 ‘ words in it, the receipt of every such trifle must
 ‘ be solemnly declared; and what is still worse,
 ‘ even that trifle may, by a factious house of
 ‘ Commons, be interpreted as a bribe, and the
 ‘ receiver expelled as an infamous and corrupt
 ‘ member.

‘ From these few remarks, my Lords, the im-
 ‘ propriety of the methods proposed by this bill
 ‘ for preventing corruption must, I think, mani-
 ‘ festly appear; and I shall next endeavour to
 ‘ shew, that they may be of the most dangerous
 ‘ consequence, not only to our constitution, but
 ‘ to every gentleman that shall hereafter be a
 ‘ member of the other house. When a gentleman
 ‘ has by publick services merited, and the crown
 ‘ has,

‘ has, by a well judged gratitude, bestowed a just
‘ reward, I hope, even the terrors of corruption
‘ will not prevail with us to say, that a gentleman,
‘ for receiving such a reward, ought to be exclu-
‘ ded the house of Commons; and yet, if this
‘ bill should pass into a law, no gentleman, while
‘ he is a member of the other house, could receive
‘ a reward from the crown, let his merit be what
‘ it will, without running the risk of being ex-
‘ pelled that house, and loaded with the infamy
‘ of his having betrayed his country for the sake
‘ of a corrupt reward from the crown; for what-
‘ ever gratuity or acknowledgment he receives
‘ from the crown, he must give an account of it
‘ to the house, and then he is to stand the event
‘ of a vote, whether that gratuity shall be deemed
‘ a reward from the crown for the services he has
‘ rendered the publick, or a bribe from the mini-
‘ ster for his having approved of his measures in
‘ that house. In this case, if the majority of the
‘ house, perhaps not half full, should happen to
‘ be such as disapproved of the measures pursued
‘ by the administration, we may easily judge of
‘ the event. The gentleman, whom I may, in
‘ this case, properly call the criminal, would be
‘ condemned, and expelled the house, without
‘ having an opportunity to prove the publick ser-
‘ vices for which the reward was given, or to
‘ shew the benefits that had, or might accrue to
‘ his country from those services. And thus,
‘ perhaps, one of the most faithful servants of the
‘ crown, and one of the most honourable and use-
‘ ful members of the commonwealth, might, by
‘ accident, be loaded with the reproach of being
‘ an infamous betrayer of his country, for no
‘ other reason but because the crown had been
‘ grateful enough to acknowledge his merit, and
‘ he so imprudent as to accept of that acknowledg-
‘ ment,

ment, whilst he was a member of the house of Commons.

Innocence, I shall grant, my Lords, is a great encouragement, and may give assurance to a person accused; but even before the most just, the most impartial, and the most steady judicature, no man would chuse to stand a trial, let his innocence be never so manifest, let the proofs he has to depend on be never so clear and convincing; and therefore, if this bill should pass, I must suppose that no member of the other house, while he continued so, would be so imprudent as to receive any reward, or indeed any favour from the crown; because, if he did, his own declaration would be an accusation against him, upon which he would be obliged to stand his trial, before a judicature, which, considering the number of judges, can never be steady in its judgments, and in a case which cannot be thoroughly cleared up by proofs of any kind, but must always, in a great measure, depend upon the opinion his judges have of his innocence and merit. In such a case, and before such a judicature, where no man can be certain either of the number or of the persons of those that are to be his judges, I am sure no wise man would run the risk of exposing himself to a trial, by accepting of any reward or gratuity from the crown, while he continued a member of the other house; and, if the expectation of an immediate reward be allowed to be a great incitement to worthy actions, as, I believe, it will, it must be allowed, that the passing of this bill into a law, would very much discourage all those who may hereafter be members of the other house, from endeavouring to serve the publick in any other capacity, which would very much derogate from the present character of that branch of our legislature, and might at last render it contemptible,

‘ temptible, or so factious, that it would be im-
‘ possible to govern the society according to the
‘ forms prescribed by our constitution.

‘ This bill, therefore, my Lords, if it should be
‘ passed into a law, would not only be inconve-
‘ nient and dangerous to those who may hereafter
‘ happen to be members of the other house, but
‘ it would be of the most dangerous consequence
‘ to our constitution ; for if the members of the
‘ other house were of no service to their country,
‘ in any capacity but that of their being members
‘ of one of the branches of our legislature, and
‘ if they did nothing, as such, but agree to what
‘ was proposed by the ministers of the crown,
‘ which would be the case under a just and wise
‘ administration, the house itself would become
‘ contemptible among the people, and this would
‘ make it easy for some future ambitious Prince
‘ to overturn our constitution, by laying that
‘ house entirely aside. On the other hand, if a
‘ majority of the members, in order to recom-
‘ mend themselves to the notice of their country,
‘ should become factious, and oppose even the
‘ justest and wisest measures that could be propo-
‘ sed by the administration, unless the complexion
‘ of the house could be changed by a new election,
‘ which, considering the popularity of an opposi-
‘ tion to court measures, would always be ex-
‘ tremely precarious, the constitution would be
‘ brought into an impossibility of existing ; for the
‘ crown would be under a necessity of yielding
‘ to the factious majority in the house of Com-
‘ mons, or of attempting to govern without a
‘ Parliament. If in this attempt the crown should
‘ succeed, our constitution would be overturn’d,
‘ and an absolute government establish’d ; and
‘ late experience has shewn us, what we are to
‘ expect from the crown’s yielding to a turbulent
‘ faction in the other house ; for such a fac-
‘ tion

‘ tion would never be satisfied with any reasonable
‘ concession: From one concession they would
‘ aspire to another, till at last they had left the
‘ crown nothing to yield; and thus a common-
‘ wealth would again be establish’d, which of
‘ course would soon deviate into a sole tyranny,
‘ under some one or other of the factious lea-
‘ ders.

‘ From what I have said, my Lords, I think, it
‘ is evident, that the methods proposed by this
‘ bill for preventing corruption, are both impro-
‘ per and dangerous; yet, so great an enemy am
‘ I to corruption, so fond am I of every method
‘ that may in the least contribute to prevent it,
‘ that I should agree to the bill now under our
‘ consideration, if I thought it would have the
‘ least effect. But I am fully convinced, that it
‘ would be found altogether ineffectual: I am
‘ really surpriz’d, how any Lord can imagine, it
‘ will have the least effect. If we suppose a man
‘ so abandon’d to all virtue and honour, as to be-
‘ tray his country for the sake of a secret bribe
‘ or pension, upon such a man can we suppose,
‘ that an oath will have any effect? Such a
‘ man, my Lords, will receive his bribe or his
‘ pension, and will, if you desire it, the very
‘ next moment declare upon oath, he never re-
‘ ceiv’d any gratuity or reward from the crown.
‘ The infamy of perjury itself is not near so great,
‘ as the infamy of a man’s betraying that trust
‘ which his country has reposed in him; and
‘ can we suppose, that a man who despises the
‘ latter, will shew the least regard to the former?
‘ In this case, the penalties of perjury will signify
‘ nothing; for the penalties already inflicted by
‘ law upon pensioners that continue to sit and
‘ vote in the other house, are so great, that, I am
‘ sure no man would run the risk of incurring
‘ them, if he thought there were any possibility
‘ of

‘ of proving the crime against him ; and where a
‘ man depends solely upon the impossibility of
‘ proof, no penalty can have any effect ; for with-
‘ out a proof no penalty can ever be recover’d ;
‘ and therefore, unless we can fall upon a way
‘ of making it easy to find a proof, I am afraid,
‘ it will be impossible to prevent committing of
‘ the crime, any other way than by the electors
‘ always chusing gentlemen of virtue and honour
‘ to represent them in Parliament ; and whilst
‘ they do so, we have no occasion for any laws
‘ against corruption.

‘ With regard therefore, my Lords, to the clan-
‘ destine, the corrupt, and the scandalous rewards
‘ or gratuities, which may be given by a future
‘ minister to some of the members of the other
‘ house, on account of their voting there accord-
‘ ing to his directions, this bill can have no effect.
‘ It cannot in the least contribute towards pre-
‘ venting such practices, but, on the contrary, it
‘ will, in my opinion, encourage them, because,
‘ among the people, it will render the guilty less
‘ liable to be suspected, and the less liable a man
‘ is of being suspected, the more easily he may be
‘ tempted to be guilty. The very oath by this bill
‘ prescribed, he will look upon as a full vindica-
‘ tion in the eyes of the world ; and thus, by his
‘ perjury, he will think he has wip’d off the infam-
‘ y, at least, if not the guilt of his treachery.

‘ My Lords, it is, in my opinion, one of the
‘ worst arguments that can be made use of in
‘ favour of this bill, to tell us, that we ought to
‘ agree to this remedy till a more effectual can be
‘ found out. If we are in any danger from cor-
‘ ruption, it would be a most imprudent step to
‘ apply a remedy which we know to be ineffec-
‘ tual ; because, the applying of such a remedy
‘ might lull the nation asleep, and prevent our
‘ thinking how to contrive a remedy that would
‘ really

‘ really be effectual. A man labouring under a
 ‘ dangerous distemper, is apt to hope for great
 ‘ benefit from every remedy he takes ; and,
 ‘ by putting too much trust in lenitives, too often
 ‘ delays thinking of, or applying an effectual
 ‘ remedy, till his case becomes incurable. This
 ‘ may be our fate : By trusting to the remedy
 ‘ proposed by this bill, we may be induced to de-
 ‘ lay contriving or applying any other, till our
 ‘ case be grown desperate ; and, therefore, I must
 ‘ be against the bill for the very same reason, that
 ‘ other Lords seem to be for it—Because I am an
 ‘ utter enemy to corruption. I think it one of
 ‘ the most dangerous distempers a free state can be
 ‘ infected with, and shall always be against apply-
 ‘ ing lenitives of any kind. If there be, at pre-
 ‘ sent, no such infection in this state, we have
 ‘ no occasion for any sort of prescription : If we
 ‘ are infected, let us search the infection to the
 ‘ root, and at once apply some effectual remedy ;
 ‘ for, I hope, there is no political infection, for
 ‘ which a specifick may not be found, by a skil-
 ‘ ful and willing physician.’

The last that spoke in this debate was the Earl
 of *Abingdon*, who standing up again, spoke in
 substance thus, *viz.*

Earl of
Abingdon's
 speech.

‘ My Lords,
 ‘ I beg pardon for troubling your Lordships a
 ‘ second time upon this occasion, but I rise up to
 ‘ speak to order. My Lords, it is against order to
 ‘ take notice, in this house, of any thing that has
 ‘ been, or may be done in the other. We are to
 ‘ do what we think right, without giving our-
 ‘ selves any trouble about what has been, or may
 ‘ be done in the other house ; and yet, I find, the
 ‘ chief objection made use of against this bill is,
 ‘ that the other house may make a wrong use of
 ‘ it.

‘ it. Shall we, my Lords, refuse to do right, be-
‘ cause another assembly may do wrong? Shall we
‘ refuse to give a man a sword for defending him-
‘ self, when we know he is in danger of being
‘ attack’d, because he may turn the point, and stab
‘ himself with it: This, my Lords, is a very
‘ strange sort of argument. But now I am up,
‘ I shall beg leave to shew, that there is nothing
‘ new intended by this bill, nor any power given
‘ to the other house, but what they have already.

‘ Before I do this, my Lords, I must observe,
‘ that upon a question for going into a committee
‘ to consider of a bill for preventing corruption,
‘ I was surprized to hear the noble Lord that
‘ spoke last, find fault with those who had endea-
‘ voured to set in a true and clear light the mon-
‘ strous deformity, and the fatal effects of that po-
‘ litical distemper; for surely, the more sensible
‘ we are of its deformity and fatal consequences,
‘ the more we shall abhor the crime, and the
‘ more we abhor it, the more ready every one
‘ will be to agree to our spending one day at least,
‘ in endeavouring to find a remedy for the conta-
‘ gious distemper. I shall grant, that none of
‘ your Lordships have attempted to justify corrup-
‘ tion. I hope no Lord will ever dare to do so
‘ in this house; but without doors it has been
‘ justified, as a necessary means of government;
‘ nay, pamphlets, or rather libels upon the nation,
‘ have been wrote for this very purpose, and sup-
‘ posed to have been countenanced by those whose
‘ business and duty it was to have suppressed
‘ them. But tho’ none of your Lordships have
‘ endeavour’d to justify corruption, yet, I cannot
‘ think, that those who oppose this question, are
‘ so sensible of its fatal effects as they ought to be;
‘ for, suppose this bill imperfect, suppose the me-
‘ thods proposed ineffectual, yet, this can be no
‘ reason for our refusing to go into a committee
‘ upon

‘ upon the bill : We may be able to amend the
‘ bill, so as to make it a perfect and effectual bill ;
‘ and, as the noble Lord who spoke last seems to
‘ think, that by an able and willing physician, a
‘ specifick may be found for every political dis-
‘ temper, I hope he will give us his assistance ; for
‘ I make no question of his ability, and I hope he
‘ will not, by his giving his negative to this ques-
‘ tion, give me any room to doubt of his will.

‘ How the noble Lord came to imagine, that a
‘ gentleman who had receiv’d a just reward from
‘ the crown, or that any gentleman would be ex-
‘ cluded, by this bill, from having a seat in the
‘ other house, I cannot comprehend. My Lords,
‘ I have perused the bill with all possible care,
‘ and I can find no words by which any man is
‘ excluded from having a seat in the other house,
‘ unless he refuses to take the oath prescribed by
‘ the bill. But the noble Lord says, the other
‘ house may, upon his making the declaration
‘ proposed, exclude him by a vote of their house :
‘ That is to say, they may expel him. In this
‘ case, can it be said, that the gentleman is ex-
‘ cluded by this bill ? No, my Lords, he is ex-
‘ cluded by their vote ; and that vote cannot be
‘ founded upon this bill, but upon the common
‘ law, or upon the laws now in being against
‘ pensioners. Therefore, this bill contains no ex-
‘ tension, nor the least innovation of any of the
‘ laws now in being, with respect to those that
‘ have, or have not a right to sit and vote in the
‘ house of Commons ; nor can that house, by this
‘ bill, acquire any right or power but what they
‘ now enjoy.

‘ I shall grant, my Lords, that no member
‘ ought to be expelled by the other house, with-
‘ out a just cause ; but, in this respect it must be
‘ allowed, that the members of the other house,
‘ are the sole and absolute judges. Suppose they
‘ should,

‘ should, by a vote, expel a gentleman unjustly,
‘ can that vote or sentence be now questioned in
‘ any other judicature or assembly? My Lords,
‘ it is now as absolute as and irreverfible as it can
‘ be, should this bill be paffed into a law; and, if
‘ they have hitherto made no wrong ufe of this
‘ absolute and uncontrollable power, why should
‘ we fufpect their doing fo in time to come? With
‘ refpect to the rewards and gratuities that are
‘ given by the crown for real publick fervices,
‘ they are always well known, and openly ac-
‘ knowledged: They have always been fo; and as
‘ the other houfe has never yet thought of look-
‘ ing upon any of them as a penfion or bribe, or
‘ of expelling a member on account of his having
‘ receiv’d fuch a reward or gratuity, tho’ the re-
‘ ceiving of it was openly and without any legal
‘ compulfion avowed, can we think that a gen-
‘ tleman’s acknowledging, in purfuance of an act
‘ of Parliament, the receipt of fuch a gratuity
‘ or reward, will any way alter the conduct of the
‘ other houfe in this refpect? With regard to
‘ fuch gratuities or rewards, let the future con-
‘ duct of the other houfe be what it will, it can
‘ be no way influenc’d by this bill; becaufe, as
‘ fuch rewards and gratuities are publickly given,
‘ and as publickly receiv’d, a proof can never be
‘ wanting, the other houfe will always hear of
‘ them, tho’ no fuch bill as this fould ever pafs,
‘ and they may, if they have a mind, expel the
‘ receiver either upon his own acknowledgment,
‘ or upon a proof, or upon common fame; but I
‘ muft deny, that they can load him with infamy,
‘ or make the world believe, that he is a corrupt
‘ betrayer of his truft.

‘ Real infamy, my Lords, is a punifhment that
‘ can be inflicted by nothing but the juftice of the
‘ fentence; for when a court or afsembly decrees
‘ that to be a crime, which is really a virtue, or
Vol. XIX, G g ‘ finds

‘ finds a man guilty that to the world appears to
 ‘ be innocent, the infamy recoils upon the judges,
 ‘ and their sentence does honour to the person
 ‘ condemned. This would be the case, if ever
 ‘ the other house should unjustly expel a man for
 ‘ receiving a just reward for some publick service :
 ‘ The nation he had served, and the King who
 ‘ had rewarded him, would rise up in his vindi-
 ‘ cation ; and a sentence of infamy, as well as dis-
 ‘ solution, would certainly be passed upon such
 ‘ a factious assembly. But, if corruption should
 ‘ ever spread over a majority of the other house :
 ‘ If a minister should, by flattery, gain the abso-
 ‘ lute direction of his Sovereign, and by bribes
 ‘ and pensions, the direction of the house of
 ‘ Commons ; no man will suppose, I believe, that
 ‘ such a house would ever expel a member for
 ‘ receiving a gratuity or reward from the crown ;
 ‘ and tho’ a sentence of infamy might probably
 ‘ be passed upon the whole assembly by the na-
 ‘ tion, yet, no sentence of dissolution would ever
 ‘ be passed upon it by the crown. It is this, my
 ‘ Lords, that may render the other house both
 ‘ contemptible and factious. It may become a mi-
 ‘ nisterial faction for oppressing the people, and
 ‘ betraying the Sovereign : Then, indeed, it will
 ‘ become contemptible : The very name of Par-
 ‘ liament would, in a short time become hateful
 ‘ to the people ; and then it would not only be
 ‘ easy for an ambitious Prince, but happy for the
 ‘ nation, to have the use of Parliaments laid en-
 ‘ tirely aside.

‘ The danger therefore of not preventing cor-
 ‘ ruption in the other house is very great, and as
 ‘ to the dangers pretended to arise from the me-
 ‘ thods proposed by this bill for preventing it,
 ‘ there is not the least foundation for them ; be-
 ‘ cause they arise not from this bill, but from a
 ‘ supposed abuse of power in the other house ;
 ‘ and

‘ and this I have shewn, that house is as liable
‘ to run into, should this bill never pass, as they
‘ can be supposed to be, after it is passed into a
‘ law. Nay, they will be more liable to run in-
‘ to an abuse of their power, should no such bill
‘ as this be ever passed; because a corrupt house
‘ of Commons, under the influence of an arbi-
‘ trary and wicked minister, may more probably
‘ run into an abuse of their power, against the
‘ friends and servants of their country, and con-
‘ tinue that abuse longer, than a factious house of
‘ Commons can be supposed to do, against the
‘ friends and servants of the crown; for this
‘ plain reason, because the crown may, and cer-
‘ tainly will put an end to the power of the lat-
‘ ter, as soon as they begin to abuse it; but the
‘ crown will never put an end to the power of
‘ the former, as long as the King happens to re-
‘ main under the direction of such a minister.
‘ There is not therefore the least shadow of reason
‘ for saying, that the methods proposed by this bill
‘ for preventing corruption can be inconvenient
‘ or dangerous, either to the constitution, or to
‘ those who may hereafter happen to be members
‘ of the other house; and, as to their being im-
‘ proper, because of the trifling gratuities mem-
‘ bers may sometimes receive from the crown,
‘ the objection, I think, is as ill founded. My
‘ Lords, if a gentleman of the other house should
‘ receive a horse, a watch, or any other trifle
‘ from the crown, I can see no impropriety in
‘ obliging him to declare it: If he receives it
‘ upon any honourable account, I am sure he will,
‘ he ought to declare it, whether he be obliged
‘ by law to do so or no; and, I am sure, there is
‘ no impropriety in our taking every method that
‘ can be thought of, for preventing the members of
‘ the other house from receiving a present from
‘ the crown upon any dishonourable consideration.

‘ Now, my Lords, with regard to the effect
‘ this bill may have upon the abandoned, I shall
‘ grant, the sin of perjury will have very little
‘ effect upon them; but the penalties of perjury
‘ will have an effect even upon the most abandon-
‘ ed, otherwise we must suppose, that the laws
‘ now in being against pensioners are ridiculous.
‘ When a crime can be secretly committed, I shall
‘ grant, it is a great encouragement to its being
‘ often committed; but all crimes are committed
‘ under an expectation of secrecy, yet, we find
‘ they are often discovered; and corruption is not
‘ one of that sort of crimes that may the most
‘ secretly be committed, because there must always
‘ be at least two persons concerned, and if we
‘ should lay a penalty upon the corruptor as well
‘ as the corrupted, these companions in iniquity
‘ may, as others do, impeach one another. There-
‘ fore our adding the penalties of perjury to the
‘ penalties already by law inflicted, will certainly
‘ have some effect upon the most abandoned, and
‘ the sin of perjury will, I hope, prevent some
‘ from accepting of any corrupt gratuity from the
‘ crown; for though it be wrong to accept of any
‘ such gratuity, yet, it has been, and may often
‘ be accepted, without the receiver’s supposing,
‘ he thereby betrays that trust which is reposed in
‘ him by his country.

‘ But the noble Lords, who have spoke against
‘ this bill, are all under a mistake when they sup-
‘ pose, that the penalties already by law inflicted
‘ can, even in case of a discovery, be made effec-
‘ tual against every sort of corruption; and, to
‘ shew this, my Lords, I must observe, that cor-
‘ ruption is of four sorts. It is either by way of
‘ pension during pleasure, or by way of pension
‘ during a term of years; or, it is by way of a
‘ sum of money paid for the whole dirty work of
‘ a session, or by way of a sum paid and repeated
‘ for

‘ for every particular infamous jobb. The first
‘ two sorts were long thought so innocent, that it
‘ was a question, whether such men should be ex-
‘ cluded from their seats in the other house, and
‘ therefore it became necessary to exclude them by
‘ express statute, under the penalties mentioned in
‘ those statutes; but before a man can be subjected
‘ to those penalties, it must be proved, that he
‘ had a pension settled upon him by sign manual,
‘ or some other sort of grant, either during plea-
‘ sure or for a term of years: From thence it is
‘ plain, that neither of the two other sorts of cor-
‘ ruption can be brought within these statutes, or
‘ subjected to the penalties thereby inflicted; and
‘ this, I believe, is the chief reason that those
‘ penalties could never be recovered; because, if
‘ there are, or have been any pensioners in the
‘ other house, those pensioners have been paid
‘ annually without any sign manual, or other
‘ grant for establishing them, and such pensioners
‘ or corrupt persons are neither excluded by those
‘ statutes, nor subject to the penalties thereby
‘ inflicted. But, will any Lord say, that such
‘ infamous corruption is not prohibited by law?
‘ My Lords, those that receive a sum of money
‘ for the dirty work of a session, or for any par-
‘ ticular infamous jobb, are excluded from their
‘ seats in the other house by common law; and
‘ therefore it was unnecessary to make any express
‘ statute for excluding them. If the fact could be
‘ discovered, they would of course be expelled;
‘ but, even upon a discovery, they are as yet sub-
‘ ject to no penalty by express statute, nor could
‘ they, I believe, be prosecuted by any method at
‘ common law. One of the chief intents of this
‘ bill therefore is, to prevent a member’s being
‘ guilty of either of these, which are the most in-
‘ famous sorts of corruption, by subjecting the
‘ person so corrupted to a prosecution at common
‘ law,

‘ law, and to the penalties of perjury, in case he
 ‘ should receive such a bribe, and afterwards be so
 ‘ wicked as to deny it upon oath. Whether this
 ‘ will be altogether effectual I shall not say; I be-
 ‘ lieve it will not; but, I am sure, it will be more
 ‘ effectual than to leave such criminals, as they
 ‘ are at present, absolutely free from any penalty,
 ‘ nay, from any prosecution at common law; and
 ‘ therefore I must think, that those Lords who
 ‘ are against our going into a committee upon this
 ‘ bill, are far from having that horror which they
 ‘ ought to have, at the infamous, contagious, and
 ‘ dangerous practice of corruption.’

The question being at last put, it was carried in
 the negative, 52 not contents, to 40 contents;
 whereupon the Lord *Delawar* moved to reject the
 bill, which was agreed to without a division.

At the end of this session, *viz.* on *Tuesday* the
 29th of *April*, the right honourable *Arthur Onslow*,
 Esq; Speaker of the house of Commons, upon
 presenting the money bills for the Royal Assent,
 spoke in substance as follows, *viz.*

Mr. Speak-
 er's speech
 to the King.

‘ Most gracious Sovereign,
 ‘ The Commons of *Great Britain*, in Parliament
 ‘ assembled, beg leave to present to your Majesty
 ‘ the money-bills for the sums that are necessary to
 ‘ carry on the great and important business of this
 ‘ nation. They amount, in all, to four millions
 ‘ of money; an immense sum indeed! but granted
 ‘ by your Commons not only with chearfulness,
 ‘ but unanimity, and a great part of it with unu-
 ‘ sual dispatch; this, Sir, arose from the assurance
 ‘ they have, that it will be expended for the great
 ‘ and necessary purposes for which it is granted.

‘ Thus, your Majesty has the satisfaction to
 ‘ perceive, that your faithful subjects have done
 ‘ their duty, in enabling your Majesty to support
 ‘ those

‘ those vast armaments both by sea and land,
‘ which are, under your Majesty’s wise direction,
‘ to procure them satisfaction for those wrongs
‘ that have been wantonly inflicted upon this na-
‘ tion by an insolent enemy, who vainly imagined,
‘ that a prudent forbearance was the effect of pu-
‘ sillanimous councils, and that willingness to a-
‘ void, if possible, a destructive war, proceeded
‘ from an inability to punish their injustice. But,
‘ thanks to heaven, there is yet a strength and
‘ spirit in the nation, that may convince them
‘ how fatally they are mistaken, and the sum
‘ which your faithful Commons have now the
‘ honour to present to your Majesty, is a proof of
‘ the great power which this nation is able to ex-
‘ ert, when the glory of your Majesty’s crown,
‘ and the preservation of their own just and un-
‘ doubted rights calls it forth. At the same time,
‘ the unanimity and chearfulness which appears a-
‘ mong your faithful Commons, to support your
‘ Majesty in this just and necessary war, may give
‘ other, and more formidable powers to under-
‘ stand, what they are to expect, if they shall
‘ join with the present enemies of your Majesty’s
‘ crown and people. It is, perhaps, owing to this
‘ unanimity and chearfulness, that we are as yet
‘ engaged in a war with *Spain* alone, and that,
‘ during the course of this war your Majesty’s
‘ subjects have been enabled, without any material
‘ interruption, to prosecute their most valuable
‘ branches of trade, while their enemies have met
‘ with the severest checks, and have fatally expe-
‘ rienced, how feeble their riches and wealth are
‘ against the efforts of a brave people, united un-
‘ der a Prince who knows no interests separate
‘ from theirs, nor aspires at any glory greater than
‘ that of preserving them in the full enjoyment of
‘ their rights and privileges.

‘ Let the enemies of this nation, therefore,
‘ boast of their far-brought treasure; let them rely
‘ upon their wide-extended dominions, while all
‘ *Europe* are witnesses, how little the advantages
‘ that arise from either, avail against that irresistible
‘ strength, which arises from industry, liberty and
‘ commerce. These invaluable mines of the *British*
‘ treasure have been fully protected under
‘ your Majesty, and your faithful Commons reflect
‘ with pleasure and gratitude, that it is owing to
‘ this constant attention in your Majesty to the
‘ great concerns of your subjects, that they are
‘ now enabled to grant to your Majesty the great
‘ sums contained in these bills.

‘ The great success of your Majesty’s arms under
‘ your Majesty’s brave Admiral in *America*, is
‘ an illustrious proof of your Majesty’s wise and
‘ prudent care in giving the proper orders for *distressing the enemy in the most sensible parts*. The
‘ bravery of your Majesty’s subjects on that occasion, will, no doubt, convince the enemy of the
‘ superiority, which a just sense of the most ignominious treatment of your Majesty’s crown, and
‘ the barbarous inhumanities inflicted upon their
‘ fellow-subjects, will always produce in a people
‘ jealous of their Sovereign’s honour and their
‘ own rights. The other successes, that in the
‘ course of this war have attended your Majesty’s
‘ arms, are so many instances of the vast power of
‘ this nation, when she exerts her true and natural
‘ strength, and give your faithful Commons the
‘ pleasing prospect of your Majesty’s ending this
‘ just and necessary war with that glory to your
‘ Majesty, with that security to their own undoubted rights of navigation and commerce,
‘ and with that honour to the nation in general,
‘ which the goodness of your Majesty’s cause, the
‘ wisdom of your councils, and the bravery of
‘ your forces, deserve.

‘ It

‘ It will be owing to ourselves, if we are disappointed in this expectation; and we can only have ourselves to blame, if this war is not attended with numberless advantages to your Majesty’s dominions. But if we are united at home, we have nothing to dread from abroad; and we have every thing to hope from your Majesty’s known attachment to the rights and liberties of your people. Our situation, as an island, defends us from all attacks of foreign power, and your Majesty’s faithful Commons hope, that no disunion among ourselves shall ever give the common enemies of the nation, whoever they are, those advantages which they now despair of obtaining by arms. It is union alone, (and we may say with pleasure, we are all united in the present great work) that can take from our enemies the least shadow of hope to succeed, either by open force, or domestick treachery. It is by each of us in our several stations endeavouring to promote that duty and zeal for your Majesty’s person and government, that regard for the laws and constitution of this kingdom, and that abhorrence of those principles which have ever tended to subvert our liberties; it is by such a behaviour alone, that we can reap those blessings, which your Majesty’s wise and mild administration, and the glorious success of your Majesty’s arms in the course of this war, gives us the most solid foundation for expecting.

‘ At the end of the last great war, in which the very power that your Majesty’s arms are now chastising, was a party against us, we might have secured those advantages in the most effectual manner, had we been but true to ourselves, and had we not given up in a shameful manner, all the terms which this nation had a right to expect from a long, glorious, and expensive war. Providence has again brought the same opportunity

‘ nity about; and your Majesty will, we hope,
‘ soon retrieve, by your wise and successful con-
‘ duct in the prosecution of this great and impor-
‘ tant war, those advantages, in point of com-
‘ merce and navigation, that were then sacrificed
‘ to our domestick animosities, which would not
‘ suffer us to discern our real interests. But your
‘ Majesty’s regard for the rights and privileges of
‘ your subjects on this great occasion, has united
‘ all parties in a just sense of the wrongs the na-
‘ tion has suffered; they are all agreed upon the
‘ terms your Majesty has a right to require, and
‘ your Majesty’s faithful Commons will think
‘ themselves happy, they will think all the trea-
‘ sure employed at this important juncture, wisely
‘ and usefully apply’d, if it shall procure to the
‘ nation those advantages of commerce and navi-
‘ gation, which we then gave up.

‘ It is from the regard your Majesty has always
‘ shewn for the just rights of your subjects, from
‘ that inviolable attachment to the interest of this
‘ nation, which have been always the rule of your
‘ Majesty’s administration, that your faithful Com-
‘ mons promise to themselves such a full security
‘ in the exercise of their navigation, as may raise
‘ this nation to a higher pitch of grandeur than
‘ she could have hop’d for even on the conclusion
‘ of that great war. The measures which have
‘ hitherto been pursued, give them the strongest
‘ reason to believe, that all their just expectations
‘ will be fulfilled, and that the reputation, com-
‘ merce, and influence of this nation, under your
‘ Majesty, will be put upon such a footing, as to
‘ put them beyond the possibility of all future vi-
‘ olation, even from the most powerful and most
‘ formidable enemy, which this nation now has,
‘ or may hereafter have to encounter.

‘ As your Majesty, by the attention you have
‘ still paid to the just desires of your people; as
‘ by

‘ by your Majesty’s continual application to the
‘ sense of your great Council upon every step that
‘ has been taken in the prosecution of this great
‘ work, you have convinced your subjects that
‘ you pursue no interests separate from theirs, so
‘ there is nothing that may be necessary for them
‘ to fulfil in the future management of the war,
‘ that your Majesty may not justly promise to
‘ yourself from their affections and gratitude. As
‘ they and all *Europe* are witnesses with what re-
‘ luctance your Majesty entered into this war,
‘ while there remained any hopes of obtaining,
‘ in the way of negotiation, that which your Ma-
‘ jesty endeavours now to obtain by force of arms;
‘ as they feel no other inconveniencies from it,
‘ but such as must unavoidably happen in the
‘ course of a maritime war, so they have reason
‘ to hope that it will be as gloriously ended, as it
‘ has been hitherto successfully conducted, and that
‘ all *Europe* will be convinced from the fate of
‘ *Spain*, how dangerous it is to provoke the re-
‘ sentment of your Majesty, or to attack
‘ the rights of a nation, who derive their riches
‘ and strength from commerce. And indeed,
‘ who can say, that this war may not be critical
‘ to *Great Britain*, by opening channels of trade
‘ hitherto denied to your Majesty’s subjects?
‘ Who can say, it is not reserved to be the pecu-
‘ liar glory of your Majesty’s reign, that *Great*
‘ *Britain* shall, from the event of this war, extend
‘ her commerce, and enlarge her possessions, so
‘ as to acquire a degree of strength and power
‘ unknown to her under the most glorious of
‘ your Majesty’s predecessors?

‘ Their glory often desolated their kingdoms
‘ and impoverish’d their subjects; but it may be
‘ your Majesty’s happiness to reconcile your glory
‘ to the noblest, the richest gifts of peace and
‘ commerce, by the encouragement given to your
‘ Ma-

‘ Majesty’s subjects, to attack the possessions of
‘ your Majesty’s enemies in *America*. A bill, to
‘ which your Majesty has already given your
‘ Royal Assent, has this same session passed both
‘ houses for the purpose ; by that bill such encour-
‘ ragement is given to your Majesty’s adventuring
‘ subjects, or other your Majesty’s forces, if they
‘ shall attack and conquer any part of the ene-
‘ mies distant possessions, as cannot fail of obtain-
‘ ing those advantages in trade and navigation,
‘ which we were formerly so wanting to ourselves
‘ as to overlook ; advantages that may raise the
‘ power and reputation of this nation to the
‘ highest pitch upon the most solid foundation,
‘ and unalterably fix the balance of *Europe* in the
‘ hands of your Majesty, and your august House.
‘ These are the consequences which your Maje-
‘ sty’s subjects may reasonably promise to them-
‘ selves from the event of this war. They are conse-
‘ quences that will distinguish your Majesty’s reign
‘ to all posterity, by making this war as produc-
‘ tive of happiness and riches to your Majesty’s
‘ subjects as others have been of desolation and
‘ ruin.

‘ The great aids which your Majesty’s faithful
‘ Commons now present to your Majesty, will
‘ enable your Majesty to retain the dominion of
‘ the seas, which will render it impossible for any
‘ power in *Europe* to give your Majesty’s enemies
‘ such assistance, as to wrest from your Majesty
‘ any of the advantages which your Majesty’s
‘ subjects promise to themselves from this war,
‘ and which will be such a source of wealth to
‘ this nation, as may give posterity reason to re-
‘ flect with pleasure upon the generous views of
‘ your Majesty, and the provident wisdom of this
‘ Parliament.

‘ And now may that God, to whom your
‘ Majesty has now appealed, bless your Majesty’s
‘ coun-

' councils and arms with the success which the
 ' justice of your Majesty's cause deserves, and
 ' make this war as glorious and happy to your
 ' Majesty, and subjects, as it has been wisely and
 ' necessarily enter'd into by your Majesty. And
 ' that your Majesty's faithful Commons may not
 ' be wanting to your Majesty, to the nation, or to
 ' themselves, in providing for what lies at their
 ' door towards making this a glorious and a
 ' successful war, they beg your Majesty's gracious
 ' acceptance of the following bills, which will
 ' convince your Majesty and all the world, that
 ' under whatever difficulties this nation may la-
 ' bour from its publick debts, yet your Majesty's
 ' subjects will always find the means of support-
 ' ing your Majesty, while your Majesty so effec-
 ' tually employs your power in protecting them.'

And his Majesty, after having given the Royal
 Assent to the several bills that were ready, conclu-
 ded the session with the following most gracious
 speech :

' My Lords and Gentlemen,
 ' The zeal which you have shewn for the sup-
 ' port and prosecution of the just and necessary
 ' war, in which I am engaged, is a fresh proof
 ' of your concern for the honour and interest of
 ' my crown and kingdoms. As this great and
 ' national undertaking is the principal object of our
 ' attention and expectations, so the justice of our
 ' cause, and the success which hath hitherto at-
 ' tended my arms, give us the most reasonable
 ' hopes, that, by the continuance of the divine
 ' assistance, we may see a happy issue of it.

King's
 speech at
 the end of
 the session.

' Gentlemen of the House of Commons,
 ' I thank you for the effectual supplies which
 ' you have granted me for the service of the
 ' cur-

‘ current Year. The best return I can make, is
‘ to assure you, that they shall be duly imploy’d
‘ to the purposes for which they were given.

‘ My Lords and Gentlemen,
‘ I have formerly recommended to you union
‘ amongst yourselves, as being highly conducive
‘ to the carrying on this great work with honour
‘ and advantage, and to the more speedy obtain-
‘ ing of all possible justice and satisfaction from
‘ the crown of *Spain*, for the many grievous
‘ injuries suffer’d by my subjects, and effectual
‘ security for the freedom of our commerce and
‘ navigation for the future. I do now earnestly
‘ exhort you to promote and extend that union
‘ in your respective countries. Let the support of
‘ the common cause of the nation prevail, to at-
‘ tain this desirable end. Our enemies must al-
‘ ready have been made sensible, in some degree,
‘ of the weight of our just resentment: They
‘ see my kingdoms in such a posture of defence,
‘ as must render all attempts from them, with-
‘ out encouragement from amongst ourselves,
‘ vain, and desperate. They see the trade and
‘ navigation of my subjects protected, as far as
‘ the nature and circumstance of a maritime war
‘ will possibly admit; and, at the same time, the
‘ most valuable branches of the *Spanish* commerce
‘ greatly interrupted, and subjected to many dif-
‘ ficulties and losses. From these happy effects
‘ of my early endeavours, and your ready con-
‘ currence, at the first entrance into the war, I
‘ cannot but hope, that the preparations which
‘ I am now making, for carrying it on in the most
‘ proper places, and in the most vigorous and
‘ effectual manner, will be bless’d with success
‘ equal to our just expectations.’

After

After which the Lord Chancellor, by his Ma-^{Parliament}
jest's Command, prorogued the Parliament to ^{prorogued.}
Tuesday the 3d of *June* then next.

The End of the NINETEENTH VOLUME.

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

which the Land Chancellor by his Mr. ...
... the ... then next

THE END OF THE ...

Bayernische
Staatsbibliothek
München

x

8/2007

x

8/2007



A Collection Of The Parliamentary Debates In England From The Year M,DC,
LXVIII. To the present Time

Bd.: 19

London (1742)

Brit. 136-19

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10279169-5